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THE WRITING ON THE WALL

BOOKS ON THE GERMAN ARMY

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THE WRITING ON THE WALL

BY

GENERAL STAFF'

'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.'

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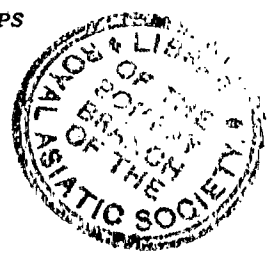
WITH FOUR MAPS



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WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1906

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PREFACE

THE object of this work is to call the attention of the public to the absolute unpreparedness of our land forces for the tasks which they may be called upon to perform. It is foreign to the wish of the author to criticise the action of the military authorities, who do their best with the means at their disposal. Many of the matters animadverted upon, which to the uninitiated would appear to be subjects which should concern the military authorities alone, are really outside their control, and cannot be altered without the consent of Parliament or of the Treasury. It is the firm opinion of the author that if the navy could be disposed of for a week or ten days, an invasion carried out on the lines depicted could be successfully undertaken, and that the re-establishment of British naval supremacy would not necessarily

relieve the situation. He is well aware that under present conditions it is most improbable that an enemy could obtain supremacy on the sea for even such a short period. But it is the unexpected which happens, and it appears to be a mistaken policy to have only one line of defence when the stake at issue is so great. The sea and the weather are factors with which it is impossible to reckon; on more than one occasion in our national history they have been conducive to the discomfiture of our enemies. Fortune, which favours the bold, may, on the next occasion, invoke their aid against us.

The twentieth century is an age of inventions, and it is possible to conceive circumstances in which a Power, by the aid of some new engine of war, might obtain a temporary naval superiority over another which was possessed of a stronger fleet, but had not the opportunity of utilizing the new invention. The old proverb says that 'it takes two to make a quarrel,' but history clearly shows that any nation bent on war can always find a plausible pretext for carrying out her wish at the moment which suits her best. It was not the result of chance that in 1866 the Prussians had just

been armed with a new breech-loader when war with Austria was declared, nor was their re-armament with a new gun just before the '70 campaign a mere coincidence. Self-interest alone governs the high policy of rising nations, and from this standpoint the action the Germans are assumed to take is justifiable.

Welt politik knows neither ethics nor gratitude, and the rulers of Germany are not philanthropic cosmopolitans, but far-seeing patriots with a well-defined and unaltering aim. Prussia, which a hundred years ago was at the lowest depths that she had ever reached, has, by adopting a steadfast policy and always seizing a good opportunity for self-aggrandizement, now become the most powerful State in Europe. All honour to the brains which conceived it, and the energy and courage which has carried it out. But it is not to our advantage that this line of action should be continued at our expense.

The advance of Russia in Asia and our position in Canada have given us frontiers conterminous with those of great Powers, and if we intend to keep our possessions we must be prepared to defend them, and for this

purpose our present land forces are absurdly inadequate.

A strong England would seem, at the present moment, to be the only means by which the balance of power in Europe can be restored, and if we wish to maintain the position which we so long have held, we must be prepared to face the trials with which an all-seeing Providence has, at the commencement of most centuries, thought fit to test our fitness for it. In England at the present day the so-called rulers of the people dare not attempt to put into force any great measure which the will of the people does not absolutely demand, and it would be only after the people had clearly stated that it was their wish that it should be so that any Government could undertake those drastic alterations in our whole scheme of defence which the author believes to be absolutely necessary, and it is with the object of appealing to the people that he publishes this sandwich of facts and fiction.

PART I

SOME PAGES FROM McLEOD'S 'HISTORY OF ENGLAND'

PUBLISHED IN 1915

CHAPTER I

THE Boer War, and the enormous drain on the resources of the country which it caused, induced the people at its conclusion to demand an inquiry. The fact that at one time in the campaign there was practically no solid small-arm ammunition left in the country, and that the rifles of the troops would at the time have been of less use than pikes; the fact that units had been obliged to surrender owing to the want of the most ordinary military precautions on the part of their commanders; and the fact that many of the auxiliary troops sent out were, on their arrival in South Africa, quite untrained and simply a means of supplying the enemy with accoutre-

ments, arms and ammunition, undoubtedly one and all warranted a most searching inquiry.

A committee under the presidency of Lord Esher was assembled, collected evidence, and arrived at some excellent conclusions. As far as they were popular the recommendations of the committee were followed, but not a party vote was jeopardized for the sake of the Empire. Expediency, and not efficiency, was the note of the Government in power. To have openly advocated the principle of compulsorily training the whole nation to the use of arms, even in the modified manner recommended by certain members of the committee, would have cost the party many votes, and it preferred to die of rot, and linger on until the end of 1905, to standing by a principle the carrying out of which would have saved the nation from the humiliation described in the following chapters.

It has been asserted that it is the duty of the nation itself to demand drastic alterations such as would have been incurred by an entire upheaval of our military system, rather than that of any Government to commit suicide by trying to force a wise but unpopular principle. But before this contention can be allowed,

it must first be admitted that the work of the leaders of a nation is solely to carry out popular measures, and that it is no part of their duty to look ahead and face unpopularity for the good of their cause.

A committee, under the Duke of Norfolk, had the temerity to recommend compulsory service for the militia. This idea was, with one exception, ridiculed by all the leading papers in the kingdom; for the dark days with which the nineteenth century set had, within three years, been totally forgotten. In those days most men would have given much to have known that every able-bodied Englishman was trained to the use of arms.

As above stated, those of the proposals of the various committees which were most calculated, in the eyes of the Government, to win votes, were followed. An Army Council was appointed, with the Secretary of State for War at its head, and carried out the same work in the same manner as had previously obtained, except only that the hand of the Secretary of State for War was more in evidence than under the old system, that the Finance Department was more than ever master of the situation,

and that the various heads of the departments did not obtain more than a small proportion of the responsibility recommended by the Esher Committee.

The terms of service of the soldier had, in 1902, been altered from seven years with the colours and five with the reserve to three with the colours and nine with the reserve. Early in 1904 the pay of the men was raised, in the hope that this concession would attract recruits of a better class, but neither the alterations in the terms of service nor the extra pay had much effect, and as sufficient men to keep the Indian Army up to establishment could not be found in any other manner, men who originally enlisted for three years, and only had one year of this three to complete, were sent out in large numbers. This one year's tour to India, called by the men 'the yachting trip,' was not a satisfactory way of spending the army vote. Early in 1905 the terms of service for the greater part of the army were again altered to nine years with the colours and three with the reserve, and in the autumn of that same year yet another category was added to this conglomeration, and men were invited to enlist in

the Home Army for two years with the colours, and ten years in reserve.

These various expedients for obtaining recruits were not resorted to without due and careful consideration, but were adopted in the hope that, by making the terms of service more attractive, recruits of a better class would be obtainable, and the day of that bugbear, conscription, postponed.

Besides the classes of regulars already enumerated there were militia, Imperial Yeomanry, and volunteers. Some 50 per cent. of the regulars serving in the ranks of regiments at home were boys nominally under twenty, but actually under eighteen or nineteen, who were precluded on medical grounds by the regulations from being sent abroad; and this army was nevertheless the most costly in the world.

The Secretary of State for War who took office in 1903 was, however, the first who acknowledged the absolute necessity of dividing the British Army into a long-service army for garrisoning our foreign possessions, and a short-service army with a large reserve only to be used in case of a national emergency, and great credit must be given to him for admitting

this undoubtedly correct principle, but without compulsory service this principle could not be carried to its legitimate conclusion. So afraid, indeed, was the Secretary of State for War of being considered to favour compulsory service, that he committed himself to the statement that such a measure would increase the army vote by £40,000,000, an estimate which we now know to be ridiculous.

High military authorities had given it as their opinion that 500,000 men would be required on the North-West Frontier of India in case of hostilities with Russia, but Governments preferred not to think of anything so embarrassing as such a war, and to leave any unpopular measures to their successors.

The recruits who enlisted were, as has been already stated, undersized boys, a large proportion of whom ruined their health and damaged their hearts by excessive cigarette-smoking, and whom it was found necessary to pamper on account of the fact that anything unpopular affected recruiting. It was, moreover, found inexpedient to give these recruits an honest day's work, such as would for a less wage have been demanded from them in civil life.

A great difficulty existed in finding the range accommodation necessary for properly training the army in musketry, and all attempts to thoroughly exercise the volunteers in this most essential branch of a soldier's profession were met by the same obstacle. Our recruits and our soldiers were, it is true, allowed a larger number of rounds for practice purposes than was provided for the troops of any Continental Power (and money could not have been better expended); but on account of this limited range accommodation musketry had to be so hurried that nothing like the full value was got out of the ammunition. In Germany it was found possible to give almost every company its own private range, thus enabling full instructional value to be got out of every round, and a system of training to be adopted which compared very favourably with our own in every particular, but was rendered impossible for the reasons already given. In that country safety ranges, which enabled firing to be carried on up to 600 yards with full charges, existed in the neighbourhood of every garrison town, and were used throughout the year without any accident. In England, however, the use of

such ranges was prohibited, because with them it was impossible absolutely to preclude the chance of a bullet going astray, although it was a million to one against it doing so, and another thousand to one against its killing anyone if it did so. The danger of one of the population of the town being hit was known to be infinitely less than that of his being run over crossing the street; but such a risk could not be taken, even when the question at stake was one of grave national importance; for if a citizen had by any chance been killed or wounded, however undesirable a member of society he might have been, he would have been called a martyr of militarism, and the fact would undoubtedly have been made use of for party capital.

The above remarks applied to almost every military station throughout the United Kingdom, and on the introduction of the small-bore rifle many ranges were closed which were never reopened. Range practice may, however, be considered as the ABC of a soldier's musketry training, and field-firing is the more advanced course, which is quite necessary to make a man an efficient shot on service. This most

important branch was, however, with us carried out under conditions which made it little better than a farce, for to carry out field-firing properly requires a large space of ground, and this was hardly ever available.

Our enemies, on the contrary, taught their men by allotting a piece of ground equivalent to about 20 English square miles to every army corps. The whole of this ground was available for field-firing, both by artillery and infantry, and the lessons which they taught us so painfully were learned by them on these pieces of ground.

A Manœuvre Act, enabling tracts of country to be manœuvred over by troops under certain conditions, was passed in 1901, but was seldom enforced, and never in its entirety. Shooting landlords and shooting tenants demanded such large compensation, and brought such pressure to bear on the Government, that manœuvres were deprived of much of their value by the large restrictions placed on the movement of troops, even in the prescribed areas. Our officers were as well aware as those of any foreign nation of the necessity of teaching men where and how to dig, for they recognised that

the spade was almost as important an implement of warfare as the rifle. Nevertheless, troops were seldom allowed to dig at manœuvres, and when they were, the position of the trenches was governed, not by tactical considerations, but by the amount of compensation which would be demanded. Little pieces of tape were put down instead of a field-work being made, and manœuvres were in this particular a farce. The old fable of the farmer who told his sons to dig, as a treasure was buried in his garden, was indeed verified, for had our men been accustomed to using their spades, we might have been saved part of the humiliation we suffered.

It may be well to here make a few remarks with regard to the militia.

In some cases militias were entirely kept together by their Colonels, great county magnates, who patriotically devoted their time to this object, which could not have been otherwise achieved. Great credit and the thanks of the nation were due to these gentlemen, but the system was rotten, and it by no means followed that these Colonels had military qualifications sufficient to justify their commanding their units in the field, although they were indis-

pensable to their maintenance in time of peace. Among the Majors and Captains there was usually a proportion of useful officers who had previously served in the line, and often one or two other keen and energetic men, who did their best to educate themselves for their work. There was, however, usually a very marked difference between those who had, and those who had not, seen service in line battalions. The remainder were officers who looked on the training as a month's outing, during which they met pleasant companions, and who took little serious interest in their profession, and were principally in the hands of their colour-sergeants, who came from the line. The subalterns nearly all consisted of aspirants for commissions in the line. Those who succeeded left the militia; those who did not succeed either also left the militia, or remained on, and passed into the category which has already been dealt with. A certain proportion of the non-commissioned officers were seconded from their line battalions to serve in the militia, but the routine of the depot was, as a rule, not calculated to improve their professional acquirements. These non-commissioned

officers, who were militiamen pure and simple, were, as a rule, but broken reeds; and their task was a very difficult one, especially in manufacturing and mining districts, for it often happened that a non-commissioned officer who at his ordinary work held a subordinate position had in his section men who in civil life were 'gangers,' and who consequently brought undue influence to bear on him, reminding him that if he were not blind to their shortcomings he would suffer for it when the tables were reversed. The chief duty of the militia was to act as a recruiting-ground for the regular battalions.

Before closing this chapter, it would be well to make a few remarks on a subject which indirectly had a great influence on the army and on the attitude of the nation towards the army. The nation had grown luxurious and vulgar to an extent never previously approached in English history, and this was greatly responsible for its aversion to any kind of military service. Our national sports and games did something towards counteracting this influence, but the way in which fetishes were made of football and cricket had many bad effects as

well as good ones. These games, just as our sports, in moderation were excellent, and had an exhilarating effect on the physique of those actually taking part in them, but the turning of the best performers into demi-gods was a feature which had bad results.

A letter published in the *Standard* on this subject, and written by a Japanese gentleman who had been brought up in England, had spent eleven years in Japan, and then returned here, proves the truth of the adage that outsiders see most of the game, and so forcibly sums up the situation which in this respect obtained in 1905, that it may be well to insert it. It ran:

'I notice a distinct and lamentable deterioration in the character, habits, and action of the English people. In the first place there is, judging by parliamentary speeches and articles in the magazines and newspapers, a failure to appreciate the situation, the dangerous situation. Other countries are not blind, and Japan is certainly alive to the changes for the worse in the administration and character of the English. This steady depreciation is revealed by unmistakable symptoms. First and fore-

most I am struck with the absence—from your educational system, at all events, of the lower, middle, and working classes—of any provision for teaching them their duties to the State. English education instils discontent. They learn how to exact their rights, but there is apparently not a word or a line in any of the text-books, or in the spirit of the educational code, which teaches sacrifice for the country as a condition of national life. In Japan and Germany it is otherwise.

'In the eleven years that have elapsed since I was here I notice a distinct decay in religion. The influence of Christianity seems to be waning, and in its place a new gaiety and search for enjoyment have come into being. Religion and patriotism seem to be on the wane in England, and, at all events, are practised by the few. I do not speak of music-hall patriotism, but of self-surrender, such as we know it in Japan, and as the Germans know it. I think that this new worship of material things is partly due to American influence on English character. You have become more excitable and materialistic, and the intermarriage between many of your peers and the daughters of rich

Americans has helped to dethrone the old English spirit of simple faith in noble ideals. The Americanization of the English is dangerous, and may be fatal. Americans may try all sorts of experiments without harm. There there is plenty of room to expand. You in England have no room to expand, and the conditions do not exist here which would enable you to try experiments of a socialistic and visionary description. The American influence, which has so greatly increased, is accompanied by the growing strength of the Jewish capitalist element. Their influence is cosmopolitan, and wealth, not duty, is the ideal that the masses of the people are tempted to form

'The spread of luxury and the religion of comfort affect your public services. I cannot speak much about the navy, though, with all my admiration for it, I gather that there are survivals from early days which will impede its powers on the day of action. But on the army I can speak plainly. Your Boer War, and the failure to organize an efficient military force adequate to your needs, have made a painful impression in Japan. Since I have been in England I observe a great increase in

the luxury of the army. Some of your officers wear corsets,* and the people seem light-hearted over the condition of your army. Do you not see that the conditions in England are so artificial, with the purchase of food from abroad, the concentration of the masses in towns, and the absence of physical training or the teaching of patriotism, that nothing in the world can sustain them except virtue in your Parliamentary and public service? But I find in your public life a great many men with axes to grind in Parliament, in the army, and on the Press. There are far too many legal men in your Parliament. More business men are wanted in both Houses. The business element is needed in all Governments, but in England more than anywhere.

'Do not think that you can buy an alliance that will maintain you in safety. The rejoicings over the Anglo-French *entente* strike me as unreal, and indicate rather a love of ease than the strength of national character. I will go even further, and say that the alliance with Japan is a mark of England's decadence; while the suggestion that has been made that

* The author does not believe these two statements to be quite accurate.

Japanese troops might be required for the defence of your Indian frontier is a suggestion that could only come from a nation which knows that its period of decline has begun. The recent festivities over the French fleet were a flare-up. It is too sudden to endure, and is a sign of decadence, just as the alliance with Japan is a sign of decadence. Both were clever acts on the part of your Foreign Secretary, but they indicate decay of the old John Bull spirit, which does not extend to the middle and the lower classes.

'As to the other causes of this deterioration, I would have you note that, whereas in Japan all women, high and low, nurse their own children, soothing syrups and prepared foods for the lower classes, wet nurses for the higher, are destroying the stamina of your people.

'No, I do not think the case of England is hopeless, or I should not venture to speak out in the hope of arresting the process of decay, but if the decadence is to be stopped it will be by a little bit of social revolution, by a revision of your educational system—in a word, by more democracy, not anarchy. You should throw your army open to everyone, and not

allow social position to influence appointments. When I was at Cambridge, one of my friends was not a bright sort, and was known as such, but that undergraduate is now in a very high position, and is only saved from exhibiting his real intellectual status by the dry-nursing of efficient secretaries. In your Parliament there are far too many men with axes to grind, who are bent on personal advantage. I allude to neither party in particular, but generally there is an indifference to the country which saddens me. What will be the result in ten, twenty, or twenty-five years I do not know. It depends on Germany. The Kaiser is the only man in Europe who has appreciated the real danger to the nations of the West of the Japanese Renaissance. The late Sir Andrew Clarke, who was a great engineer officer, perhaps saw the danger too, but he obtained no hearing.

'It is quite possible that in ten years' time Japan will be in a position to build a Chinese fleet. Battleship construction is beyond us at present, but by the time the anniversary of Waterloo has arrived we may be on the road to construct 100 battleships for ourselves and China. Japanese sea-power is based on the

fact that as islanders we are a maritime people. You are ceasing to be a maritime people; you employ foreigners, not only as sailors, but as pilots, in numbers so large that if ever you have a war with a great naval Power you will be crippled. As England is forsaking her maritime habits, Germany is increasing and straining every nerve to build up over-sea trade and a strong navy. Your public-school spirit and University spirit is very good, but the time has gone by when wars can be won by pluck and spirit. And as you are dropping your maritime habits, and as the tendency of the best English education is not to teach the new science, but to instil pluck and spirit, collision with a first-class scientific Power will probably be disastrous to England—far more so than your newspapers and politicians believe. Your working men are full of latent patriotism, but it is not evoked. Even in peace-time several millions of your population barely earn a scanty living. Why should they be patriotic? Teach them patriotism, and organize for their benefit better conditions of life. They will then feel that they owe something to their country. This patriotism is evoked in Germany,

and Germany is the only Power that is rising in Europe. All the others are going down. But the vast populations of Russia, if they were organized by German brains and science, would become as formidable as the Chinese temperate millions organized by Japan.

'I do not think that the commercial struggle for the markets of the Far East will be so injurious to Germany as to England. German methods of trade are efficient, and Germans work harder than the British will consent to do. I think the commercial rivalry between Japan and Great Britain will be acute, and that Britain will suffer.

'On the missionary question I have the clearest views. England is not in a position to send missionaries to Japan. They are no use. If England or America does send a really first-rate man he is most useful, but the great majority of missionaries you send to the Far East are not sufficiently well-bred to approach our middle classes. Your missionary societies send University men to Central Africa, and the sons of retail tradesmen to Japan. Some of these missionaries do much harm. They try to introduce socialism in Japan, and

socialism in the sense of commonalty of property and artificial equality is bad for Japan as it is bad for England. Both need the development of individuality and the maintenance of honourable traditions. There was a Chinese Emperor about 4,000 years ago who introduced socialism for about thirty years. His head was cut off, and the Chinese have been convinced individualists ever since.

Count Hirosawa then briefly alluded to the effect of the vices of drinking and gambling, and added that the public morality of England, as displayed by the condition of some of the streets after nightfall, was surprising to a believer in feudalism and the dignity of a ruling race. He admitted that the institution of the Yoshiwara was bad, but defended it on the ground that anyone resorting to the Yoshiwara did so deliberately, while in England the footsteps of lads were dogged with temptation in the public streets.

The letter concluded by expressing the opinion that the complete revision of our educational system, and the adoption of universal military training, with the introduction of democratic methods into our system of

government, whereby efficiency should be the sole test of employment by the State, were the only means by which England could be saved from collapse.

The following returns, taken from the *Times* of December 26, 1905, show the justice of Count Hirosawa's statement that our mercantile marine was manned to a very great extent by aliens.

At the port of Cardiff the proportion of A.B.'s and firemen engaged in foreign-going vessels between July 1 and December 31, 1901, and January 1 and June 30, 1905, was as follows:

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1901.

	Foreign.	British.
	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Firemen	45	55
A.B. steam ...	42·1	57·9

JANUARY TO JUNE, 1905.

	Foreign.	British.
	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Firemen	56·43	43·57
A.B. steam ...	53·73	46·27
A.B. sail	39·42	60·51

The very real danger which this state of things represented is so apparent as to need no comment.

A further warning to the nation was given in an able article by the military correspondent of the *Times*, which was published in that paper on February 17, 1906, and which ran as follows:

1806 AND 1906—A PARALLEL.

The catastrophe which overwhelmed Prussia in 1806 is the most stupendous military disaster recorded in the annals of modern war. Within the working hours of a single day the world-renowned army of Frederick, the pride and glory of its country and the admiration of all foreign soldiers, was beaten to the ground; 22,000 men were killed and wounded, 18,000 made prisoners, while 60 colours and 200 guns became the trophies of the victor.

The Prussian army and the Prussian people were so completely pulverized at Jena and Auerstädt on that fatal October 14 that they allowed their country to be overrun without another attempt at resistance. Never before or since has such a discreditable panic seized upon a whole nation and paralyzed all effort

and will. The army laid down its arms in mobs without fighting, and the fortresses surrendered in batches at the first sight of a French uniform. Hohenlohe gave up at Prenzlow, Blücher at Lübeck; Magdeburg opened its gates to Ney without hesitation; Stettin hauled down its colours on the appearance of Lassalle's light horse; Küstrin, not to be outdone, placed boats at the enemy's disposal to enable him to cross the Oder. There was, as the Duchesse d'Abrantes truly declared, a regular *dégringolade de villes*. Napoleon was allowed to enter Berlin as conqueror without another blow being struck for Prussia. Three hundred and forty captured standards graced his triumph, while the sword of Frederick became, and has since remained, a Napoleonic family heirloom.

There is nothing necessarily discreditable in defeat in battle. One army wins without thereby gaining the right to claim possession of all the military virtues, while the other loses without deserving the discredit attaching to all the opposite qualities. But when an army, after two defeats on a single day, never again musters up courage to face the enemy, when a people is so lost to all sense of shame that it hears of the capture of its regiments with

relief, when an epidemic of surrenders occurs in all the fortresses, whether impregnable or not, and the remnants of the beaten army are pursued by the enemy without drawing rein from one end of the national territory to the other, then something must be very radically wrong with the army or with the nation, or with both, and the causes of the *débâcle* are worth research.

Since Prussia atoned for her unparalleled failure, and after her regeneration, many of the best heads in Prussia and in Germany have endeavoured to trace back to their first causes these suprising failures. Clausewitz, Ranke, von Treitschke, Höffner, von der Goltz, Heimann, Dechend, Lettow-Worbech, von Knesebeck, Rüchel, Scharnhorst, von der Decken, and many others have, whether earlier or later, contributed to the elucidation of the causes of disaster. Letters, memoirs, and autobiographies, together with general histories and special studies, abound in all languages. It is not want of material that should trouble us, but rather its quantity, and particularly the number and complexity of the reasons given to account for this great catastrophe.

But to a British investigator this inquiry gradually begins to assume a quite peculiar

interest, since it cannot fail to dawn upon him, as his researches extend, that the analogy in military matters, and even in the spirit of the age, between the Prussia of 1806 and the Britain of 1906 is remarkably close and painfully true. We are compelled at last to devote a special page of our notes to the enumeration of the list. Every author gives us something. Even the personal characters of individuals appear thoroughly familiar to us under other names. We seem to be living in the present day; and, since like causes produce like results, we ask ourselves with a shudder whether some one will say of us, as Heinrich Heine said of Prussia, that a nation in arms breathed upon us, and we disappeared.

In Frederick's day the Prussian Army consisted of a long-service professional standing army of some 80,000 men, mainly foreigners, supported by a militia, 120,000 strong, recruited at home. The men composing this militia remained liable for service for twenty years; but even in Frederick's day they only served one year with the colours, and under his successors this period was reduced to three months, the total training, including subsequent periods of drill, amounting to twenty-one months in all.

Like an old blunderbuss which hangs over the fireplace in a keeper's lodge, the army of Frederick had become in process of time dangerous only to those who attempted to handle it. The standing army in 1806 possessed elements of weakness arising partly from defects in the army itself, but still more from failings in the general tone of society and the decadence of the people, class by class. Initiative and enterprise in the army had been gradually killed by red-tape and routine, and the strict observation of the rule of promotion by seniority had brought a number of lifeless people to the top, and had buried or disgusted the good men.

But the Prussian Army in 1806 was not a bad army, and it possessed some good qualities. In a spectacular and parade sense it was the admiration of all beholders. The officers thought, worked, and reflected much. The army, says von der Goltz, was neither idle nor rotten; the men were hard-working, disciplined, full of goodwill, clean, well groomed, well brushed, well drilled, and thoroughly instructed. But, he adds, it is not necessary for decadence to be apparent in an army for defeat to supervene. Defeat, he declares, will strike down even an army which is full of good

qualities if this army, or the Government it serves, misconceive the conditions necessary for success in war. In this judgment Clausewitz agrees, declaring, in his work which has only recently seen the light, that, while there was an infinite amount of scientific study devoted to matters of secondary importance, there was a total absence of the necessary contemplation of the grandeur of modern war, and of the forces which it places, or should place, in action. There was, he says, no grand and comprehensive scheme of reform before the country embracing all parts of the armed forces. Nothing constructed on grand lines and in the grand manner had the faintest chance of acceptance, while day by day mediocrity gained ground.

There were quite as many army schemes before Prussia in the years antecedent to her great catastrophe as there have been before the British public of late. It was not that people failed to read the signs of the times. The failure, the fatal failure, lay in the absence of action. Long and futile discussions took place about one plan of organization or another, but the only characteristics common to the whole were dissipation of energy in talk and failure to act. Such as these discussions

were, their only visible result was to hasten the catastrophe they hoped to avert by warning Napoleon that his hour could not be long postponed.

Many of the ideas expressed during the era of talk were perfectly sound, and were afterwards taken up and employed to secure the regeneration of the army and of Prussia. There was Baron von Knesebeck, for example, who might have been writing for the British public to-day. He declared that the real if unexpressed opinion of the regular army on the subject of the militia was that the latter was a mob of ragamuffins badly led by bad Generals, a body which would take to flight at the first opportunity unless it stopped to pillage. Von Knesebeck declared that this view was absurd and out of date, and that, in order to obtain the large numbers required in modern war without unendurable expense to the country, it was necessary that a large part of the army should be regularly engaged in its civil avocations, and should only return to the colours in time of war, when the army would become fully representative of the manhood of the nation.

Scharnhorst was a convinced apostle of the same school. He was for arming the mass of

the people, and considered that an aggressor would never be able to obtain such good value from a militia as a people standing on the defensive. He thought that in no other country but England would it be so easy to create a great national militia as in Prussia. He desired that the numbers should be large, not only to impose upon an enemy, but because he thought that serious results might be obtained from the services of this militia in war.

Von der Decken was another adherent of this line of thought, and desired to weld the army with the people, regretting deeply that this policy was still in its infancy. He attributed the cause of failure to take action to the spirit of the people. Our artists and savants, he declared, detest war because it puts the Muses to flight; the political economist is appalled when he reckons up the cost of an army; the civil authority is intensely jealous of the powers it has to resign, and considers soldiers to be the citizens of some other State; the moralist is scandalized by the ill-regulated lives of officers, while the loafer envies them their uniform and their sword; last of all, the citizen can never pardon those who may deprive him of his servant or his child.

What old Blücher thought of all this move-

ment of opinion the writer has not been able to discover, but even our gallant old comrade-in-arms joined in the general chorus, and committed to paper his 'Ideas on the Formation of a Prussian National Army,' but no records of the contents of this paper appear to have been preserved. It is, however, certain that on all sides all the best officers were hard at work endeavouring to formulate some plan of action by means of which a catastrophe might be averted. The trouble came from infirmity of purpose, waste of energy upon talk, and absence of action. When at last something was done, and the Cabinet order of August 17, 1805, developed the principle of militia under the name of 'national troops of reserve,' it was already too late, and before the reform was anything better than paper the hour of Prussia's humiliation had struck.

The King of Prussia was by no means opposed to the idea of a national army. In capacity he was infinitely superior to the majority of his advisers. But in high policy and great affairs of State he too modestly effaced himself, submitting his riper judgment and wider experience of men and things to the direction of second-rate men of inferior mental calibre. He was only the figure-head of the

ship when he might have been the pilot. He feared to displease, while his exaggerated respect for the past and the bent of his mind, which inclined him to waste time in dabbling with trivialities connected with uniforms, decorations, and etiquette, prevented him from directing with distinction the destinies of his country.

Neither Haugwitz nor Hardenberg were equal to the requirements of their position, and among the other councillors surrounding the King there were none of striking merit or capacity. Clausewitz has drawn their pictures with vinegar and acid. He describes the King's nephew, Prince Louis of Prussia, who was soon to fall on the field of Saalfeld, as 'a Prince who had no hour of serious reflection, and consequently no fundamental ideas or strong convictions which impelled him to act. He desired to resist with his heart, and not with his intelligence.'

Nor is Clausewitz more kind to others who figure in the foreground of 1806. He describes General von Gensan as 'a conscientious man, instructed upon the old lines, but incapable of a single grand or directing thought. He was crushed under a mass of papers, and his action as Chief of the General Staff was absolutely

null.' Rüchel's character is cleverly if spitefully drawn. 'An alert mind,' says Clausewitz, 'without sufficient power of sustained thought; a vehemence of character resembling acid; a wholly superficial instruction, made up of phrases and of shreds and tatters of ideas; an ambition that would have ended in madness had it not evaporated in vanity. He was the concentrated essence of a Prussian.'

Ill-matched was Prussia, both in diplomacy and in war, with the astute and aspiring genius of Napoleon. The Prussian army was led by old men, while at the head of Napoleon's forces there were the Emperor himself, Soult, Ney, Lannes, and Bessières, all aged thirty-seven, Marmont and Davoust thirty-six, and Murat thirty-five. These veterans of war, but youths in age, confronted the rigours of campaigning with an advantage that was overwhelming.

In diplomacy Prussia was hopelessly outmatched. Napoleon had completely outwitted both Lucchesini, the Prussian representative at Paris, and his master's Court. The respective suites of the two monarchs were positively plastered with each other's decorations. The King of Prussia was the first foreign Sovereign to accept and wear the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. A flight of Black Eagles

winged their way to Paris and alighted upon Napoleon, Cambacères, Talleyrand, Duroc, Murat, and Bernadotte. Lucchesini was a mere puppet in the Emperor's hands. Never, never, the Ambassador kept on repeating to the Duke of Brunswick, will Napoleon become the aggressor.

Lucchesini, says von der Goltz, was a diplomatist of the old school. He was not a man to seize the importance of a new era, or to recognise the process of development which had been brought about by the Revolution. For him it was always a question of persons, of their manner of being and regarding, rarely of general tendencies, and almost never of occurrences and movements among the people. He was unable to fathom the profundity of M. de Halle's remark, that unless Napoleon were compelled to sleep for fourteen hours a day the whole world would not suffice for his activity. He was not a man to grapple with events in the time of Napoleon. His despatches were an ocean of errors and illusions.

Have we any Lucchesinis? No one can say for certain except the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and those favoured few to whom circulate the secret and confidential despatches received by the Foreign Office.

Diplomacy is the only public service which deals with great public interests by manners and methods of which the public itself has only the rarest occasions for forming a judgment. Great, then, is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, for on him, and on him alone, devolves the duty of selection of diplomatic agents, of watching over their proceedings, and of insuring that ability alone entitles to high place. When history begins to review the work of diplomacy and discovers that all is not gold that glitters, it will justly place responsibility for failure on the shoulders of the Secretary of State of the day.

If Prussian policy suffered in 1806 for the want of a Bismarck, the absence of will and energy in military affairs was also due to the want of a trained head to set the crown on the arch of reform. There was plenty of zeal and plenty of intelligence, but both were spent and wasted in an arid desert of futile agitation, causing no seed of reform to germinate in unfruitful soil. The military machine, says Clausewitz, was still heard to make a creaking noise, and nobody inquired whether it was fit to do its work. Prussia, he says, was attempting to play a part in the world which was beyond her military strength, while the superior

direction of her army was without a soul. She could not contemplate grandeur, and she foolishly allowed her military affairs to be mismanaged by people with disorderly ideas and weak heads.

The catastrophe of 1806 was due to the spirit of the age in the Prussia of that day, which was faithfully reflected in the army. It was due to her consideration of war as an affair to be arranged by the King and his Government, and not by the people. It was due to the failure of the Crown to take firm hold of the conception of the Revolution, and to identify itself, promptly and closely, with the creation of a national army. It was caused by the foolish belief of leading Prussian statesmen, recently echoed in the Albert Hall, that a State can exist during a great crisis, and even profit from it, without drawing the sword, and even without having a well-tempered sword to draw. It was caused by the frivolity, egotism, and self-indulgence of the governing classes on the one hand, and the idleness and materialistic brutishness of the lower orders on the other. It was caused by the vainglory of Prussians in their forms of government, irrespective of the fact whether success or failure resulted from them. It was due, again, to the

adoption of half-measures or of none, while time was flying on stormy wings; to the mistakes of a feeble diplomacy, which confined itself to the futile tittle-tattle of the society of the capitals; and, finally, to the fear of strong men and dread of strong measures, which are the hall-marks of a decadent and enfeebled people. On all sides and on all questions soft, invertebrate, and pointless impartiality blunted resolutions, darkened counsel, and destroyed the driving power of the enthusiastic few.

Such were the causes of Prussia's disaster, according to the actual words and expressions of the best authorities who have studied and endeavoured conscientiously to define them, and it remains for the British public to decide whether the spirit of the age of Prussia in 1806 differs materially from that of Britain to-day. If it does not, then is it the will of the sovereign people that we shall carry on the analogy to its final and inevitable term?

CHAPTER II

In the previous chapter an attempt has been made to show the general unpreparedness of the country, and to illustrate the manner in which the defences on which our existence depended were made subservient to party popularity. In its cry for reduced taxation the nation had apparently forgotten that the very income-tax, which it felt to be such a burden, was the inheritance of former unpreparedness and mismanagement. The wars against Napoleon, the Crimea, and the Boer War, all shared in this distinction. In spite of the lessons of history we seemed to refuse to believe that the way to court war was to be rich and prosperous, and at the same time weak and unready, and by this combination to present a valuable and easy prize to nations who still remembered the good old rule, which ran :

'Let him take who has the might,
And let him keep who can.'

The strained relations with Germany, which reached their climax at the end of 1905, gradually improved. Societies formed in England and in Germany for that purpose had succeeded in pouring oil on petty sources of discord, and German statesmen encouraged this movement. The object of the anti-English feeling which had been fostered was to obtain an increase of the navy, and this object attained, there was no cause to give away the situation by keeping the English people on their guard.

The German navy had, during the previous decade, increased out of all proportion to our own, and in the autumn of 1905 a more extended programme for the building of warships was sanctioned by the Reichstag. Hatred and fear of England were used as a lever to obtain the necessary funds. The German mercantile navy had also increased by leaps and bounds. For instance, in the year 1900 the gross tonnage of steamships of over a hundred tons carrying the German flag was 2,891,867, and by 1905 it had risen to nearly 3,093,702 tons.

On May 15, 1908, the German Government issued an order that the tonnage of all German vessels of over a thousand tons should be re-registered, and gave orders to all ports on the North Sea and the Baltic for such ships to be detained until the necessary formalities had been carried out. This peremptory order created great annoyance to shipowners, but their objections were over-ridden. The average amount of shipping in Hamburg alone during the year 1905 was 181,000 tons, and about 175,000 tons entered the port weekly. Major Seely, M.P., called attention to this fact in a speech which he made on October 19, 1905. Delays were made by the Government authorities, and no ships were allowed to leave, and by June 1 in Hamburg alone vessels to the gross tonnage of over 500,000 tons were collected. Similar steps were taken at Bremerhaven, Cuxhaven, Kiel, Lübeck, Danzig, Stettin, Neufahrwasser, Pillau, Königsberg, and Geestemünde.

In the autumn of 1905 it had been erroneously stated by a responsible Minister in the House of Commons that no foreign enemy had sufficient ships to transport troops in such numbers as

seriously to threaten an invasion of England. It was forgotten that, whereas four or five tons gross tonnage per man is considered advisable on our troopships conveying men on a journey through the tropics, a ton and a half per man is ample for a two or three days' passage. As a matter of fact, one ton per man is what is laid down by the Board of Trade for passages in home waters.

Prussia has of late years never been at a loss for plausible excuses for her actions. The war of 1866 was forced by her at the hour at which she was best prepared, and on grounds so plausible that only the careful student of history in later years discovered them to be a pretext for enabling her to carry out her carefully-devised scheme.

As pointed out by Lord Ellenborough in a lecture which he gave in July, 1905, Prussia's action with regard to Hanover in that war is very illustrative. She sent an ultimatum to King of Hanover, giving him twenty-four hours in which to answer, but the ultimatum was not sent until the Hanoverian army had been surrounded.

In the same way the Hohenzollern incident

was, by Bismarck, made an excuse for waging war against France at a time when Germany was absolutely ready.

These examples should have opened our eyes, but they were destined to remain closed too long.

We little expected that war would break upon us, so to speak, out of a clear sky, but that we had no grounds for this supposition is proved by a statement made by Sir Frederick Maurice, who, dealing with the commencement of all wars between 1700 and 1870, in all 107 cases, says that, as far as he has been able to trace, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was the only one during 170 years in which a declaration of war preceded overt hostilities.

Monday, June 1, 1908, was the day settled for the great naval review in Portsmouth Roads. The King, accompanied by two other crowned heads, was to inspect the finest fleet that the world had ever seen.

Programmes of the day's proceedings, and charts of the positions of every vessel in the navy, were printed in all the papers, and hawked about the streets for a few pence. Everything promised an unparalleled spectacle.

The German fleet had obtained an invitation to visit Brest, and on the morning of May 31 passed through the Straits of Dover.

Affairs in the Far East had for some time given great cause for anxiety to our Foreign Office, but at the end of May the situation did not seem graver than it had been for the previous two months. On the afternoon of May 31 a very disquieting despatch was received by the Foreign Office, but no cause for apprehending immediate hostilities was felt, and no notice of the situation was given to the naval authorities at Portsmouth, for it was feared that any marked precautions on their part might give offence to the Germans, and thus aggravate the strained situation.

On the night of May 31 a torpedo attack was made on our fleet assembled in Portsmouth Roads. The position of every ship being exactly known immensely facilitated the work of the enemy. The majority of the torpedo-boats and destroyers taking part in the attack were sunk, but three-quarters of our finest men-of-war were temporarily put *hors de combat*

To complete the work that the torpedo-boats

had commenced, two heavily-laden ironclads of an obsolete type were sunk in the Channel between the Point and Southsea Castle, thus blocking the exit from the harbour for ships of any size. The exact points at which these ships were sunk were most carefully selected, and were doubtless chosen with the aid of German pilots, many of whom had been allowed to exercise their trade on our coasts.

A howl of indignation arose from the whole civilized world at this outrage committed in a time of peace, but the indignation fell short of inducing any other nations to join with us against the perpetrators of the outrage, which had secured for the Germans a temporary command of the sea, for that portion of the British fleet which had not been brought to Portsmouth, but had remained at Rosyth, was on June 2 defeated by a German squadron, who owed their success principally to the Spread Eagle turbine torpedo and the Jonathan submarine, two American inventions of which the German Government had obtained the monopoly.

CHAPTER III

A FORMAL declaration of war by the Germans reached us on the morning following the torpedo attack. A few hours later a proclamation was issued in Germany, and published in all newspapers, ordering British subjects to leave forthwith, but at the same time stating that the German Government reserved to itself the right of entirely prohibiting any person, German or foreigner, from crossing the frontiers at any time during hostilities, and that this power would be vested in the hands of the police, from whose decision in the matter no appeal whatever would be allowed. It was also stated that the object of this measure was to insure secrecy, and to prevent news getting into the hands of the enemy by unauthorized sources. A strict censorship was exercised over all newspapers.

As was stated in the preceding chapter, a large amount of shipping had been collected in the German North Sea and Baltic ports. Even before the outbreak of hostilities steps had been taken which enabled these ships, within a few hours, to be stored with ammunition and with the provisions requisite for a short sea-voyage. On the news of the great German sea-victory the shipping of ammunition and of seven days' supplies was completed, and by the evening of June 4 ten army corps, but without horses, vehicles, or artillery of any description, were embarked. The most bulky part of the stores consisted of cases containing bicycles for some 50 per cent. of the total force. The dismounted men of whom the army of invasion consisted were not previously collected, but were railed straight from their stations to the ports of embarkation, where they were marched from the trains on board ship.

On the sudden declaration of war, on a pretext of German making, and when we were peculiarly unprepared, the thought of invasion was not unnaturally paramount in the mind of every thinking Englishman. Our military

and naval authorities had, however, always held to the view that an invasion could only be attempted by a force accompanied by artillery, cavalry, and waggons, and bringing with it its own supplies; and the difficulty of landing horses, waggons, artillery, and stores was known to be so great that it could only be attempted with any chance of success at a few places on the coast, and then only under the most favourable conditions of weather.

Englishmen were, moreover, very fond of quoting a remark attributed to Moltke—that he 'would find it easy enough to get into England, but very difficult to get out of it'—and the idea was consequently generally held that complete command of the sea must be obtained and maintained throughout any land operations. The fallacy of this hypothesis was afterwards proved.

As has already been stated, making full use of their railways, and having collected the necessary shipping, the infantry were embarked by the evening of June 4. The ships also carried seven days' supplies, ammunition to the extent of 1,000 rounds per man, and bicycles with solid tyres for 50 per cent. of

the whole force, but without a horse, waggon, or gun. For infantry under these conditions gross tonnage to the extent of one ton per man was found to be ample for a two days' voyage.

In conformity with their proclamation issued on the declaration of war, the Germans had censored every telegram leaving the country, and from June 2 to June 8 allowed neither man nor letter to cross any of their frontiers. National complications with France and Russia were averted by ample apologies on the part of Germany, who pleaded that these drastic measures were absolutely necessary for the attainment of her purpose. Nevertheless, during the 7th news, which came partly from French sources and partly from certain yachting gentlemen, had leaked out that several large flotillas were approaching our coasts. These reports, and the absence of all definite news, created great alarm in England; but the idea of invasion was such a novel one that the possibility of it seemed hardly to be comprehended, and, for the reasons already given, it was thought more than improbable that it would be attempted when a powerful fleet,

capable of defeating that of the enemy, would in all probability be collected within a fortnight or three weeks.

The consternation of the nation may therefore be imagined when it was reported in a special issue of the morning papers on June 8 that landings had taken place at early dawn at some twelve or fifteen places on our southern, south-eastern, and eastern coasts. The features of the landing operations at the different places selected were more or less similar, but details of what happened at Brighton will now be gone into.

CHAPTER IV

THE morning of Whit-Monday, June 8, was a fine one with a calm sea. The sun rose at a quarter to four. At half-past three the coast-guards at Brighton were roused by a man from Mr. Brown's steam-yacht, the *Mermaid*, rushing in with the news that, some ten miles out, they had encountered a large fleet of what appeared to be men-of-war and transports steaming straight on Brighton. The bringer of this news was, however, still being questioned when three steam-packets, of from 500 to 800 tons each, accompanied by two gunboats, steamed to the West Pier, and a like number towards the Marine Pier. These steamboats were of the description of those which were in the habit of making trips along the coast, and found but little difficulty in landing the men they carried. By 4.15 a.m. a battalion had landed

on each of the two piers, and were at once pushed on to shore. Everything had apparently been provided for, and each man carried an empty sack. These sacks were at once filled with sand and shingle from the beach, and placed as barricades on the piers, from which they flanked the whole beach between the two piers and also, to a great extent, the Marine Parade and King's Road.

The Germans had packed their bicyles, all of which had solid tyres, in hermetically-sealed tin cases, inside a larger deal case. As soon as the men were ashore bicycles for these two battalions were landed, and were presently to be made great use of. The object of this packing was that, when landing on the open beach in boats, these cases could be thrown overboard and dragged ashore without any damage to the bicycles. Their ammunition was also packed in hermetically-sealed cases.

At the time there were stationed in Brighton the 1st and 2nd Volunteer Battalions of the Royal Sussex Regiment. The 1st Battalion was encamped on the Racecourse, the 2nd Battalion in Preston Park. By 4.15 a.m. these two battalions were under arms, and marching

respectively to the Marine and West Piers, but they were forestalled, and could make little headway against the enemy, who was already in possession of the piers, and had occupied all positions of vantage in their immediate neighbourhood.

It now became evident to the unfortunate inhabitants of Brighton that this was not a raid made by a few isolated battalions, for ten transports, averaging some 5,000 tons, were seen fast approaching. They were under the escort of four cruisers, and, without delay, formed up on a front of a mile and a half, the left-hand ship being opposite to Palmeira Square, and the right-hand ship more or less opposite to Lewes Crescent, and about half a mile out.

The ships had barely anchored when boats were lowered and quickly pulled ashore. The first ships to despatch their boats were those opposite to and between the two piers, and not until these had completed their landing and driven back the volunteers did the others attempt to land.

The volunteers, finding that the piers were in the possession of the enemy, had marched

on to the Marine Parade and Brunswick Terrace respectively, and endeavoured to hold the beach.

Each transport carried, on an average, twelve boats, capable of accommodating twenty-five to thirty men each. Men coming on shore did so fully accoutred, despite the risk there was of their drowning if they fell into the sea. The journey to the shore and back to the ship took less than half an hour. Within an hour five ships had, under cover of the parties holding the piers, landed some 3,000 men, and the resistance of the volunteers was at an end.

The cyclist battalions which had landed at each of the piers were relieved, and at once pushed forward on their bicycles and performed the following duties, to which they had all previously been told off, every officer and non-commissioned officer, and a large proportion of the men, being provided with maps of the country.

They removed rails and temporarily disturbed railway communication on the line between Brighton and New Shoreham, and the line to the Devil's Dyke, on the main London line, and on the line to Lewes. They picketed

all roads leading out of Brighton, and prevented any persons from moving out. They took possession of all telegraph wires, and then, with the object of covering the disembarkation of the rest of the force, took up an outpost position on the following line: New Shoreham, Trueleigh Hill, Devil's Dyke, Walstonbury Hill, Ditchling Beacon, Mount Harry, Newmarket Hill.

After the first few parties had landed, boats from the shore were seized and made use of, and by noon the whole of the troops and all the bicycles of the cavalry brigade had been landed. The men had landed fully equipped, carrying their day's rations, their iron rations, and 250 rounds of ammunition per man. The remainder of the bicycles and another 500 rounds per man were landed by 4 p.m., and before dusk the whole of the transports had put out to sea.

Telegraphic communication by means of ships and wireless telegraphy was kept up between divisions and army corps throughout the operations.

The retreat of part of the volunteers was cut off by the cyclists: some of them fell into the

arms of the Fifth Corps, which landed at Newhaven; some of them into the hands of the Fourth Division, which landed at New Shoreham; some of them escaped.

Members of the staff specially told off for the duty at once requisitioned all transports and all provisions required for the troops for the next five days. The Mayor was allowed to send a telegram to London, saying that almost all provisions had been cleared out of the town, except meat, of which there was an unlimited supply on the South Downs, and that the invaders would allow provision trains to come through into Brighton, and that the Commander would give his word that these provisions should be used for the benefit of the inhabitants. The demeanour of the general officer commanding the army corps and his staff throughout was extremely polite. They expressed regret at putting anybody to inconvenience, but nevertheless considered only their own interests. Receipts were given for everything that was requisitioned. Temporary receipts were issued by subordinate officers, and recipients were ordered to exchange these for more formal receipts at the Hôtel Métropole.

An incident was enacted in the afternoon which was illustrative of the invaders' methods of dealing with fraud. A man of the name of Bernstein had obtained a receipt for two carts which he had handed over to the authorities. He altered the two into a three when exchanging his temporary receipt for a formal one. The officer who gave the temporary receipt happened to be present. Bernstein was summarily tried and shot. It is related that no other cases of fraud were perpetrated at Brighton.

When the landing actually took place all inhabitants of Brighton were in their beds. By 5.30 a.m. the railway communication was disturbed, and the roads leading out of Brighton were in the hands of the invaders.

A few motor-cars had succeeded in getting away. Some couple of thousand people had also made their escape by rail; but few horses or vehicles had been removed from the town, and this was of great importance, for they were as necessary to the invaders as were provisions.

The force actually landed at Brighton consisted of the whole personnel of the Fourth Army Corps, but without artillery, horses, or

wheels of any description. The whole of the cavalry were mounted on bicycles, with orders to perform on their iron horses as far as possible the same duties as they would perform had they been mounted. All riding-horses seized were taken for the use of officers, and one of the first duties of the cavalry was to collect and send back for this purpose any horses they came across.

The cavalry brigade of the Fourth Army Corps was at once pushed forward, and got into touch with the cavalry brigades of the Second and Fifth Corps, the divisional cavalry getting communication with the infantry of these corps at Newhaven and New Shoreham.

The cavalry brigade was accompanied by supply officers, under whose directions two companies of infantry cyclists were told off to work. Though the country they were to march through was a rich one, the invaders thoroughly recognised the necessity of collecting supplies and driving on to the roads the stock required for slaughter purposes.

The operations in England proved the fact that a town or village, as a rule, contained between three and five days' provisions for its

total inhabitants. The larger the town, the more difficulty was there in collecting supplies; but a properly organized staff working in front of the main body invariably succeeded in overcoming all difficulties.

What is above stated applied more to other columns than to those operating from Brighton, which, according to the rule above given, with its population of 123,000, could provide sufficient supplies to last an army corps for at least a fortnight.

CHAPTER V

A GERMAN army corps consists of two divisions, each of two infantry brigades, a cavalry regiment, and divisional troops. A brigade consists of two regiments of three battalions of 1,000 men each—*i.e.*, a regiment consists of 3,000, a brigade of 6,000, and a division of 12,000 infantry. Besides these, and excepting the artillery, there are the following corps troops: A rifle battalion, engineers, and a cavalry brigade, consisting of two regiments, each of 600 men.

The engineers, being landed without the material requisite for the different technical branches which were their speciality, had as best they could to improvise these, and the large town of Brighton to a great extent supplied their wants.

In addition to the above enumerated troops, the army corps was accompanied by most of

the details belonging to it, except only that no horses or wheeled traffic of any sort were brought.

Every cart, carriage, and vehicle in Brighton was requisitioned and used for one purpose or another. Omnibuses and carriages were taken as ambulances, and flys which were in the habit of plying on the parade were used as ammunition-waggons.

It will be seen that a division consisted of between 13,000 and 14,000 men, and an army corps of some 30,000.

One battalion of every regiment and the rifle battalion, which was under direct orders of the corps commander, were mounted on bicycles. This made a total of 9,000 infantry on bicycles, besides four cavalry regiments; or, including some engineers and men attached to the commissariat, who were also mounted, a grand total of some 14,000 cyclists per army corps. These figures may be taken as approximately correct for all the different corps and divisions which landed.

The number of draught horses found in Brighton was approximately 6,000; the number of riding horses was about 12,000. The number

of two-wheeled vehicles, 2,000; and four-wheeled vehicles, 2,500. These more than sufficed for the transport of four days' provisions and ammunition. Four days' provisions for the whole army corps were carried, that, if necessary, it could be concentrated for action; but, as a matter of fact, the provisions carried for the cyclists were not touched during the first days of the march, and opportunity occurred for filling up provisions at the different places through which the troops passed. Meat was found in abundance. Forage was also abundant, and water was, with care, sufficient. All the water-carts used by the municipality of Brighton for watering the streets were requisitioned to accompany the troops, were strongly horsed, and attached to different units.

The statistics of Sussex for 1905 gave the following as the approximate numbers of live stock available in the county: Horses, 24,000; cattle, 115,000; and sheep, 440,000, besides cows and pigs. It will therefore be seen that the invaders were not likely to want for horses or for meat, although a large proportion of the horses was useless for military purposes.

The German soldier is in the habit of carrying on his back at drill and manœuvres all the kit, clothing, and equipment which he will require on a campaign, also a portion of a *tente d'abri*. Moreover, 50 per cent. of the men carry entrenching tools. With his rifle and ammunition he carries in all over 50 pounds, and is accustomed to doing long marches with this weight, and this fact greatly lessened the transport which was necessary for the army corps.

As will be seen in the sequel, our men suffered severely from the want of articles which at peace manœuvres are carried for them on waggons, but with which in war it was impossible to provide them on the days preceding an action.

CHAPTER VI

THE landings at New Shoreham and Worthing took place much under the same conditions as that at Brighton, and were attended with but little loss to the invaders.

With the landing of the Guard Corps at Bognor and Littlehampton things did not go quite so smoothly, for two torpedo-boats, which during the night of the 3rd had managed to get out of Portsmouth Harbour and elude the blockading ships, came across the expedition. Soon after midnight they attacked and sunk two transports and a gunboat before themselves being so seriously damaged that they had to make the best of their way back to port, which they succeeded in reaching in time to give warning of the impending attack to volunteers stationed at Chichester and Arundel.

The majority of the men being conveyed on the ships which were sunk were saved, but a delay of two hours was caused; and when the transports drew up opposite Bognor and Littlehampton at 6 a.m., they found the beach in the neighbourhood of each of these places held by a battalion of volunteers. Landings were commenced on the same principles as the landing at Brighton, except that there were no piers, and that troops had to be pulled straight ashore.

The volunteers had on both occasions rightly judged the points at which the disembarkation would be carried out, and received the first boats with a heavy fire, which was reserved until they were at close quarters. Owing to the small calibre of the rifles no boats were actually sunk. Six boats were pulled to shore, but the men on board, after a short fight, were made prisoners. The remaining boats pulled back to their ships. Heavy fire was now opened from the men-of-war accompanying the transports, the Germans showing no squeamishness about firing at their own prisoners, who were intermingled with the enemy, and at a range of 800 to 1,000 yards

this fire made movement on the part of the English almost impossible.

Some transports were now moved towards Selsey Bill, and there attempted a landing, which was likewise frustrated by troops which had just arrived by rail.

Landings were, however, successfully effected at Middleton, to the west of Littlehampton, and opposite Preston, which is to the east of that place. The volunteers were driven from Littlehampton by enormously superior odds, and the cyclists of the invaders, reinforced by those from Worthing, soon drove the English out of Bognor.

The landing of the Second Division of the Guard Corps at Littlehampton was completed by 6 p.m., and that of the First Division at Bognor by 8 p.m.

Cyclists from Littlehampton, reinforced by others from Worthing, had by 11 a.m. taken possession of all roads running north between Chichester and Arundel, but, nevertheless, before this time many horses and vehicles had been driven away, and although most of these were during the course of the next day re-captured and brought back, the delay caused

thereby considerably hampered the Guard Corps.

The landings of the other corps were carried out on the same principles as those described. In a few cases slight resistance was offered, but this was usually overcome by the assistance of neighbouring divisions. In other cases the sacrifice consequent on forcing a landing in the face of hostile fire was obviated by steaming a flanking party a few miles further along the coast.

By far the greater part of the English coast is suitable to the landing of infantry in boats on a calm day, and the cases containing bicycles and ammunition, packed as described, and with ropes attached, were easily got ashore. The boats were rowed in as close as practicable. The cases were then dropped overboard and hauled in if the bottom was sand or shingle. When, however, as occurred in some places, there were many boulders, this work only took place at high water, or on a receding tide, which before long left the packages high and dry.

A landing attempted at Folkestone by the Twentieth Division was temporarily repelled

by the guns at Dover and some men from the School of Musketry at Hythe, but these latter were driven away by the cyclists of the Nineteenth Division, which landed at New Romney, and a landing at Hythe and Sandgate was effected.

At some points ships had to stand out some three or four miles from shore, but here, instead of being rowed in, the boats were towed by steam launches. In some cases steamers of shallow draught ran right up to the beach and landed the men by means of planks, in the same way as is done by the small pleasure-steamers which land parties in the combes near Weymouth.

In short, by dusk on June 8 the invaders had completed the landing of all the troops, and all the ammunition and bicycles, which, besides what the men carried on them, were all the stores they brought. They came empty and went away full.

CHAPTER VII

On the night of June 8 and 9 the positions of the invader's forces were as follows, and although the exact numbers were not known to the British authorities, from the transports reported they were able to estimate them fairly accurately.

The headquarters of the various divisions were at the following places :

Guard Corps:	1st	Division	Bognor.
	2nd	,,	Littlehampton.
2nd Pomeranian Corps:	3rd	,,	Worthing.
	4th	,,	New Shoreham.
From Magdeburg—			
4th Corps:	7th	,,	Brighton.
	8th	,,	Brighton.
From Posen—			
5th Corps:	9th	,,	Newhaven, west of the River Ouse.
	10th	,,	Bishopstone and Seaford.

From Schleswig-Holstein—

9th Corps:	17th Division	Eastbourne.
	18th ,,	St. Leonards.

From Hanover—

10th Corps:	19th ,,	New Romney.
	20th ,,	Hythe and Sandgate.
Under 10th Corps,	15th Division	—Margate.

From Hesse—

12th Corps:	23rd Division	Clacton-on-Sea.
	24th ,,	Aldeburgh.

From Danzig—

17th Corps:	33rd ,,	Southwold.
	34th ,,	Lowestoft.

The routes laid down for the different divisions, and which were, as far as possible, adhered to, were as follows:

Guard Corps:	1st Division	Bognor, Chichester, Midhurst, Greatham, Alton, Odiham, towards Reading.
	2nd ,,	Littlehampton, Petworth, Milford, Farnham, Aldershot, Bagshot.
2nd Corps:	3rd ,,	Worthing, Washington, Pulborough, Five Oaks, Guildford, Church Cobham.

2nd Corps:	4th Division	New Shoreham, West Grinstead, Horsham, Dorking, Leatherhead, Epsom.
4th Corps:	7th ,,	Brighton, Albourne, Hand Cross, Reigate, Banstead, Sutton.
	8th ,,	Brighton, Cuckfield, Three Bridges, Redhill, Croydon.
5th Corps:	9th ,,	Newhaven, west of Lewes, Lingfield, Crawley Down, Godstone, Caterham, Addington.
	10th ,,	Newhaven, Lewes, Uckfield, Cowden Station, Westerham, Farnborough.
9th Corps:	17th ,,	Eastbourne, Hailsham, Horsham, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks.
	18th ,,	St. Leonards, Battle, Robertsbridge, Hurst Green, Brenchley, Peckham.
10th Corps:	19th ,,	New Romney, Tenterden, west of Maidstone.

10th Corps:	20th „	Hythe and Sandgate, Ashford, Lenham, east of Maidstone.
Under 10th Corps, 15th Division—		Ramsgate and Margate, Canterbury, Faversham, Sittingbourne, Chatham.
12th Corps:	23rd Division	Clacton-on-Sea, Weeley, Colchester, Billericay.
	24th „	Aldeburgh, Ipswich, Stratford-St.-Mary, Horkesley, Fordham, Mark's Tey, Witham, Chelmsford, Epping.
17th Corps:	33rd „	Southwold, Halesworth, Debenham, Stowmarket. Chelsworth, Sudbury, Braintree, Bishop's Stortford.
	34th „	Lowestoft, Beccles, Harleston, Billingford, Bury St. Edmunds, Long Melford, Clare, Haverhill.

It has been a matter of heated discussion whether landings would have been possible if troops had been stationed all along the coast. This manner of defending our country, how-

ever, is one which would only recommend itself to those who have not studied tactics or strategy.

The recognised principle with regard to a mountain-range or to a river-line is, whilst holding the passes or bridges in such a manner as to delay the enemy and to cause him heavy loss, to accept the fact that he will, in all probability, be able to cross the obstacle somewhere, and to concentrate all efforts on falling upon him with superior forces when he has done so. The feasibility of holding the whole of the coast-line on the martello-tower principle and in such a manner as to prevent the enemy landing, if it required refuting, is answered by what actually happened.

It has been shown how the opposition at Bognor and Littlehampton was turned by the successful landing at Worthing, which took place simultaneously to all the other landings on the morning of June 8, but if this does not prove the futility of trying to be strong everywhere, it may be well to give a few details of the landing of the Thirteenth Division at Clacton-on-Sea.

Two transports of less draught than the

remainder, accompanied by gunboats, were moved under cover of darkness as close as practicable to Holland Haven, and, utilizing their own boats as well as those of the gunboats accompanying them, sent a covering party of four companies (of 250 men each) ashore. The remainder of the transports did not arrive outside Clacton until 5 a.m. Then, without any unnecessary delay, they disembarked their men on the same principle as had been followed at Brighton.

Outside Clacton the six-fathom line is between three and four miles from shore, and boats had to be towed or rowed in over the whole of that distance.

As it happened, two volunteer battalions, who before the declaration of hostilities were going through their annual training near Clacton, were still encamped there, and, having received timely warning, were holding the pier and the seashore opposite to the points for which the boats were making. Fire was opened when they believed the boats were within a mile of them. Judging distance over water, however, is especially difficult, and until they were within 800 yards of shore no damage

at all was done. In the meantime, the four war-vessels accompanying the transports of the division opened fire on the shore, and although the actual losses caused were not great, their fire succeeded in keeping down that of the defending volunteers. It was low water, and as at Clacton the tide recedes far, and the water is shallow, the boats, which were resolutely rowed to within 400 yards of the sea-wall, were able to discharge the men who were in them, who, springing into water some 3 feet deep, at once extended and pushed forward to the attack.

Five convoys had simultaneously despatched about twelve boats each, making a total of sixty boats, each containing some twenty-five to thirty men. One thousand seven hundred men, on a front of a mile and a half, waded through the water to frontally attack the enemy, who, as already stated, was kept under fire by the men-of-war, and attacked in flank by the party from Holland Haven.

The frontal attack was by no means simultaneous, but, considering the enormous difficulties, the boats kept well in line, although waiting for the slowest boats delayed matters

very considerably. Many boats were struck, and many holes were bored in them, but the holes made by the small rifle bullets were easily stopped up, and no boat was sunk or seriously damaged. The 1,700 men lost some 300 in killed and wounded, but, aided as they were, succeeded in dislodging the volunteers.

A reinforcement from Colchester, in the shape of a battalion of militia, half an hour afterwards reinforced by another battalion, arrived at Clacton just as the volunteers had been driven from the seashore, and were able to do nothing further to prevent the successful landing of the division.

The facts detailed so far prove that landings could not be prevented by local efforts. The real surprise was caused by the fact that the British people were absolutely unprepared for the idea of a landing on the part of the enemy by infantry alone. To land transports and guns on the British shores would have been a matter of the very greatest difficulty, even in the calmest weather, and could not have been attempted if it were at all rough. With infantry, however, the difficulties are comparatively small.

CHAPTER VIII

In England on May 31 the position of the land forces was as follows: In May, 1908, as at the end of any other trooping season, home battalions had been depleted by drafts sent to the foreign battalions of their regiments, and the ranks consequently held more recruits than would have been the case at any other season of the year.

There were in the British Isles:

Cavalry regiments	...	...	17
Horse and field batteries	...	...	115
Infantry battalions	...	...	78

And some 90,000 reserve men.

On the declaration of war the reserves were called out. The men responded excellently, and by the night of June 4, 90 per cent. had joined their depots; but from these depots had to be sent to their battalions, which were

often serving in that part of the kingdom most remote from the depot.

Some 20 per cent. of the men with regular units were, however, mere boys under eighteen years of age, who had joined during the winter, and were in no sense efficient soldiers, most of them not having fired a single round of ball ammunition. A large proportion of the remainder were men who, although not recruits in the military sense, were of immature age, and incapable of standing the hardships and privations of a campaign, even in their own country.

A reference to 'Whitaker's Almanac' for 1906 shows that the establishment of the militia and militia reserve came approximately to 140,000 men, the Imperial Yeomanry to some 27,000 men, and the volunteers to some 344,000. These numbers did not, however, represent true fighting value, as the sequel will unfortunately prove.

A large number of both the militia and volunteers were garrison artillery and engineers belonging to coast defences, and consequently not available for the field army. The militia and volunteers had practically no field artillery.

There were in all 37 artillery militia battalions, all of which were garrison artillery, and allotted to the defence of some part of the coast, 2 Royal Engineer militia battalions, 10 submarine divisions, and 124 militia infantry battalions; but of these 124 battalions 28 were in Ireland, and 13 in Scotland.

The volunteer units were as under:

Volunteer artillery battalions ...	64
,, engineer ,, ...	23
Submarine divisions	7

There were also 202 volunteer infantry battalions, but of these 46 were in Scotland.

As has already been remarked, only the infantry battalions and a few of the engineers could in any way be counted on as a field army. If, however, the numerical strength of the regular forces was illusive, that of the irregular forces was doubly so.

Over 20 per cent. of the militia were untrained, even for militia, and of the volunteers a considerable percentage were ineffective. Some of them were physically quite incapable of enduring any hardships, being either unsound, old men, or young boys. Others were

hard-working and respectable men holding positions of trust, responsibility, and importance, who, though willing enough to be volunteers in times of peace, and by their example in doing so to encourage others, very strongly objected to the idea of being permanently enrolled, more especially when their enrolment necessitated their being moved for an indefinite period to a distance from the homes of which they were the sole support. By June 6, however, the majority of the volunteer battalions of the kingdom had moved into camp at some convenient place in the counties to which they belonged, and the process of weeding out those who were unfitted for service, and an incubus to their battalions, was almost completed. This, however, brought the volunteer battalions down to an average strength of between 500 and 600.

The men of those units which came from near the coast showed a very great objection to the idea of being moved from the neighbourhood of their homes, which they thought they would necessarily be called upon to protect, for every coast town or village seemed imbued with the idea that it would be the one

point on which the enemy was certain to concentrate his attention.

The average strength of a militia battalion was about 800, while the line battalions, which were on an average 600 strong, were brought up to 1,200 by the joining of the reserve.

In 1905 the actual strength of the Imperial Yeomanry was 25,341 ; the establishment was 27,631. The regiments had, on an average, an effective strength of some 400 men, but 7 of these regiments were in Scotland, and 2 in Ireland, out of a total of 56 regiments.

The reserve had brought the regular cavalry regiments up to considerably over strength, but these extra men were of little use, as there were no horses to mount more than the exact establishment, and to collect by constitutional methods the extra number required was a matter which could not be done in a week.

At dawn on June 8 the position of the mobile part of the British forces, not taking into account troops allotted to the special defence of such places as Chatham, Dover, Portsmouth, etc., was approximately as follows. No account is taken of the troops in Ireland ; for one of the first steps taken by the enemy

was to patrol the St. George's Channel with cruisers, and, until naval supremacy was again established, all communication between England and Ireland was cut off.

The system generally adopted with regard to the volunteers and militia was, as soon as they were mobilized, to encamp or billet them in close vicinity to some railway junction, whence they could be transported in whatever direction circumstances might dictate.

The Aldershot command was stationed in the neighbourhood of Aldershot, and by the joining of the reserve had been brought up to considerably over establishment; for the reserves, which were intended to augment all the battalions in the service, were all sent to the battalions serving at home, and infantry brigades were thus brought up to a strength of some 5,000 men. Eight battalions of volunteers which were assembled at Reading, and 8 battalions which were assembled at Newbury, were attached to the Aldershot command, as also was one regiment of Imperial Yeomanry which was also at Reading, three cavalry regiments, and one battery of Royal Horse Artillery from London.

At Canterbury were collected 1 cavalry brigade, 1 infantry brigade from Shorncliffe, 8 militia battalions, and 5 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Chatham, 1 regular infantry brigade and 4 battalions of militia, besides the coast defences.

At Colchester, 1 cavalry brigade, 1 regiment Imperial Yeomanry, 1 infantry brigade, 1 brigade of Royal Field Artillery, 1 battery Royal Horse Artillery, and 8 battalions of militia infantry.

At Cambridge, 8 battalions of militia infantry and 1 regiment of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Redhill, 8 battalions of volunteers and 3 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Tonbridge, 4 battalions of volunteers.

At Chichester, 1 battalion of volunteers.

At Arundel, 1 battalion of volunteers.

At Brighton, 2 battalions of volunteers.

At Clacton, 2 battalions of volunteers.

At Bury St. Edmunds, 5 battalions of volunteers and 2 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Peterborough, 7 battalions of militia infantry.

In the neighbourhood of London were 6 battalions of Guards, and encamped in the parks in and around London were 23 battalions of volunteers.

The railway companies put the whole of their magnificent organization at the disposal of the military authorities, and it was considered wiser to keep the volunteers near London, than to distribute them before it was known where they might be wanted.

The troops in the Northern command were disposed of as follows:

The regulars were kept at their garrisons, of which the principal were York and Sheffield.

Six battalions of militia were encamped at Strensall Camp, 4 at Retford, and 4 at Newcastle, 4 at Sheffield, 4 at York, and 2 at Selby.

The 49 volunteer infantry battalions forming part of the Northern command were encamped in the neighbourhood of such railway junctions as Newcastle, Darlington, Leeds, Selby, Doncaster, Sheffield, and Retford.

The Imperial Yeomanry belonging to the Northern command were disposed of as follows:

Five regiments at Strensall Camp, and 2 regiments at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The 3 infantry brigades forming part of the Southern command were collected on Salisbury Plain, where there were also 8 battalions of militia and 4 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Andover there were 4 battalions of militia infantry, at Cheltenham 5 battalions of militia infantry and 2 regiments of Welsh Imperial Yeomanry.

At and near Banbury there were 4 battalions of volunteer infantry and 7 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Bath there were 4 battalions of volunteer infantry and 6 regiments of Imperial Yeomanry.

At Bristol, 2 battalions of volunteer infantry.

At Rugby, 4 battalions of volunteer infantry.

The 3 regular battalions belonging to the Welsh and Midland command were left at their stations, the principal of which were Pembroke Dock and Chester.

The 18 militia and 33 volunteer battalions belonging to that command were kept in the neighbourhood of such railway junctions as Chester, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Birmingham, Crewe, Droitwich, and Hereford.

CHAPTER IX

THE news of the enemy's landings on our coast created absolute consternation in London, and especially at the War Office. The calling out of the reserves and the mobilization of the militia and volunteers had, on the declaration of war, been carried out by the usual methods; but the idea of an invasion had apparently not been contemplated, and no arrangement had been come to as to who should be in command of the English forces in case of such a contingency. By 8 a.m. on June 8, although it was Whit-Monday, several of the principal members of the War Office were assembled in in the room of the Secretary of State for War. The Chief of the Staff, or First Military Member of the Council, claimed that the command of the British army would necessarily devolve upon him. He quoted as a

precedent that Moltke, under similar circumstances, would undoubtedly have assumed the responsible command; but against this it was argued that Moltke, if he had issued orders, which he probably would have done, would only have done so as the staff officer of the Emperor, who was the chief of the army in the field.

Another contention was that all members of the Council should have an equal voice in the matter, but to this the Secretary of State for War, the responsible head of the army, would not agree. The Aulic Council which a century earlier had ruined Austria's chances of success seemed likely to find a counterpart in England, but this state of affairs was fortunately short-lived, for the King, who was at Buckingham Palace, had been apprised of the situation soon after dawn, and immediately summoned a Cabinet Council, who, without going into the academical questions being discussed in Pall Mall, appointed the Commander of the Aldershot Army Corps as Chief Commander of the Forces in the kingdom.

CHAPTER X

THE problem which presented itself to the Commander-in-Chief of the invading army, who accompanied the Eighth Division, which landed at Brighton, was as follows :

He wished, as expeditiously as possible, to gain his objective, which was London, feeling certain that, with that once in his hands, he could dictate terms to the English, for he thoroughly realized the enormous moral effect which would be the result of its capture. He also recognised that the English country lent itself better to attack than to defence, though it was favourable to delaying action, and it was with this latter object in view that he was accompanied by such a very strong force of cyclists. He relied on being able, immediately on landing, to make good and hold ground with the help of these cyclists, which,

if he were advancing without them, would be disputed inch by inch, and would take long to traverse.

His troops consisted of the flower of the German army, whereas he had reason to believe that the British troops opposed to him would be a very heterogeneous array. He was marching without supplies, but through a very rich country where, at all events, meat and corn were abundant. His men were in the habit of carrying on their backs all the kit they would require for a campaign, besides their *tente d'abri*, their entrenching tools, and 200 rounds of ammunition. He felt certain that his cyclists would be able to stop the roads on which the supplies on which he depended might otherwise have been driven away. All his columns were in communication by wireless telegraphy through ships left for this purpose.

He was anxious, if possible, to fight and defeat at all events a portion of the British army before entering London. He was aware of the tactical weakness inherent to all English positions, was confident in the superiority of his own troops over the militia, volunteers, and

recruits of which the British army mostly consisted. All ranks were imbued with the spirit of attack which is the foundation of all German instruction, and being confident, like Napoleon at Ulm, it suited him to allow a certain concentration of his enemy's forces to take place. The more men he succeeded in defeating, the less he would afterwards have to deal with, for he rightly calculated that partially-trained troops, after being once defeated, would take long to recover themselves before they could vigorously fight a second battle.

Throughout the initial operations the invaders had the advantage of thoroughly appreciating the situation, which had been thought out by them before they landed, as spies and secret agents had kept them well informed of the distribution of the English forces.

The question of feeding his army, if he succeeded in reaching London, did not trouble him seriously. He knew that London had four million inhabitants, and he felt certain that the British would wish to come to some arrangement to prevent these people starving, and that he would be able to stipulate for his own

men to be fed from the same source as were these four millions.

He knew that the British had never contemplated the possibility of such an expedition as the one he was commanding, when the restoration of their naval supremacy could only be a matter of a few weeks, but felt certain that, with London in his hands, he could obtain whatever terms he wanted, and a safe conduct back to Germany.

Having these objects in view, the first step was to push on his cavalry and infantry cyclists, and with them to make good as much ground as possible before the enemy had made dispositions for delaying the advance of his various columns.

CHAPTER XI

THE German Commander was correct in his surmise that the events of the morning of June 8 had developed a situation which had never been contemplated by the British authorities, and for which they were quite unprepared. The very boldness of the stroke was in itself bewildering. The general officer in whose hands the whole question of the defence of the kingdom had been placed had not long to make up his mind, and had to make his decisions with only a partial knowledge of the facts; for, although before noon he was aware of the places at which landings had been effected, he did not know whether other landings might not be projected at other points, and he was, moreover, unaware of the strength of the detachments which were landed, although the number of transports reported gave him

some clue to this. The reports which first came in were not at all definite as to the landing of artillery. The coast had been bombarded by men-of-war, and their shells were in many cases definitely reported to have been fired by field batteries which had been landed. The directing authorities were, however, from the first incredulous on this point, knowing as they did the great difficulty connected with the landing of guns and the practical impossibility of this having been so quickly effected. No reports had come in with regard to the landing of transport, and our staff found it difficult to believe that the enemy actually meant to advance with nothing but infantry, to live on the country, and to depend for his transport upon that which he was able to capture.

It was evident from the first that the invader's intention was to march on London. It was acknowledged that the effect of taking London would be paralyzing, not only to England, but to the whole British Empire; for the British Empire is by far more centred in London than is any other country in its capital. France might possibly go on fighting with Paris in the hands of an enemy. Germany

would not necessarily be on her knees if Berlin were taken. If St. Petersburg were to fall, Russia could without difficulty continue a war. The fall of Pretoria, as we discovered to our cost, did not by any means signify that the Boers were vanquished. The more artificial and the less primitive the condition of a State, the more is its life centred in its capital. This fact was fully recognised, and the paramount importance of defending London was understood. In order to do this, it was above all things necessary to delay the enemy, so that the whole resources of England and Scotland could be put into line against him.

The general nature of the English country, with its hedged roadways, its small enclosures, and wooded features, lends itself excellently to delaying action, though it has but few good defensive positions. On almost all parts of the Continent, in South Africa, and on the plains of India, positions are numerous which are suited to an army of 50,000 or 100,000 men, with a front of from ten to twenty miles, from the whole of which a good field of fire may be found; whereas in England, however skilfully taken up, it is almost impossible to find a

position of five miles long which cannot be approached in several places to within three or four hundred yards without coming under fire. It is, indeed, the exception to find a position two miles long where this is not the case. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and a position once broken is usually lost.

From what has been said it is evident that the English country is, taking it all round, much more suitable to the attack than to the defence. Indeed, it may be asserted that the only way properly to defend most English positions is to take them up simply in order to check the enemy, and to allow him to expend his energy, whilst plans are made for delivering vigorous counter-attacks.

The wooded nature of the country, limiting vision as it does, renders the use of artillery very difficult, for it is the exception rather than the rule that a range of over 1,500 yards can be obtained, and at this distance the infantry rifle begins to inflict considerable loss. This fact was always used as an argument by some British military authorities against organizing field artillery for the militia and volunteers, for it was contended that it was

unnecessary to supply with this arm troops which would only be required to defend England, a country where artillery was much less essential than in most others; and the Finance Department did not fail to make the most of this excuse for saving the public purse.

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CHAPTER XII

THE situation which actually presented itself to the British Commander-in-Chief on the evening of the 8th was as follows:

Besides the four columns advancing through East Anglia, there were thirteen moving on the capital from the south and south-east coasts. Two alternatives were open to him with reference to these latter. One was, beyond delaying the enemy in order to give time for concentration, to offer no serious opposition to his advance on London, and to mass the whole of the army in Great Britain between Reading and Oxford, and, when ready, to march on the invader. He knew that, before long, supremacy on the sea would be re-established. He also knew that, although the country would afford ample supplies for troops marching quickly through it, it would

not for any length of time sustain a large number of men concentrated for battle. This course would necessitate London being temporarily left to the enemy's mercy, and he was aware of the loss of prestige which would be the consequence of such a step; but he also knew that the enemy could not carry London away, and that, if the people showed their old obstinate courage, the campaign would not end until a crushing defeat had been dealt on the British army.

The only possible way for the invader to hold and prevent supplies from entering London would be to station troops round it; but a division, or even an army corps, consisting of 30,000 men could not permanently hold in subjection a city the population of which was four millions, and if the enemy attempted to hold London whilst he marched to encounter the British army, he would be obliged to detach a strong force. He might also be compelled to march through a country which had been denuded of supplies by the British forces who had anticipated his advance.

But, whatever advantages these Fabian tactics might possess, there was no doubt that

public opinion would demand that the capital should be defended. During the American War of Secession public opinion was on more than one occasion responsible for the adoption of false strategy, and history repeated itself.

The second alternative—that of taking up a position on the Surrey hills—was therefore the one which he felt himself constrained to adopt, and all his efforts were devoted to concentrating as large a force as he could for this purpose, and in delaying the enemy until he was ready.

The British Commander-in-Chief consequently determined on the following course:

(*a*) To place all the troops in East Anglia under the command of the General Officer Commanding at Colchester, with orders to take whatever steps he considered best to delay the enemy. Besides the strategical advantage which would accrue from defeating these columns, this course avoided the congestion which would have resulted from moving troops from East Anglia through London.

(*b*) To hold the position Guildford, Dorking, Box Hill, Reigate Hill, Gatton, Merstham Station, south of Caterham, Tatsfield, Knock-

holt—about thirty miles. For this purpose the following infantry were immediately available:

	Men.
The Aldershot Army Corps and five battalions Foot Guards from London and Windsor	30,000
Sixteen volunteer battalions from Reading and Newbury	9,000
One infantry brigade from Shorncliffe and eight militia battalions from Canterbury	11,000
One infantry brigade from Chatham and four battalions of militia	8,000
Eight volunteer battalions from Redhill	4,500
Four volunteer battalions from Tonbridge	2,500
Twenty-three volunteer battalions from London	12,000

Besides a few isolated detachments which had been on the coast.

In all, 77,000 infantry were immediately available, besides the Aldershot Cavalry Brigade, with three regiments of Household Cavalry and a battery of Royal Horse Artillery attached thereto, making a complete cavalry division, the Canterbury Cavalry Brigade, five regiments of Imperial Yeomanry

from Canterbury, and three from Redhill, also ten brigades of Royal Field Artillery, or in all, 90,000 men of all arms.

(*c*) Whilst holding the enemy in front on the above position, to fall on his left flank with an army of about 40,000 men, put under the command of the General Officer Commanding Salisbury Plain, and collected as follows:

From Bath and Bristol six battalions of volunteers, railed viâ Westbury, Savernake, and Newbury to Whitchurch.

From Shrewsbury four battalions of volunteers, railed viâ Worcester, Oxford, and Twyford to Bramley.

From Salisbury three infantry brigades and eight battalions of militia, with four battalions of militia from Andover, railed to Basingstoke, the transport marching by road.

Seven regiments of Imperial Yeomanry were at Shrewsbury, and as the rolling stock in Wales had been little indented upon, it was considered possible to rail the greater part of these to Twyford. (They arrived there by the evening of the 9th.)

The mounted troops from Salisbury to be marched to Basingstoke.

Six regiments of Imperial Yeomanry from Bath also to be railed to Litchfield, north of Whitchurch.

Five battalions of militia and two regiments of Imperial Yeomanry railed from Cheltenham, viâ Swindon, Didcot, and Reading to Bramley.

Except in the case of one or two of the yeomanry regiments, these movements were completed by noon on the 9th; and although the auxiliary troops had not their proper transport, they had been able to a great extent to improvise what was absolutely necessary, but there was no question of tents or camp equipment.

The network of railways with which the English Midlands are intersected enabled troops to be brought from towns which were close to one another to the neighbourhood of points where they were required by different lines of railway which did not cross or interfere with one another, although in some cases routes were very circuitous.

As in most cases it was only a question of entraining infantry, elaborate platforms and sidings were not essential.

On the outbreak of hostilities the War Rail-

way Council, including all the managers of the great railway systems, had been formed, and capably undertook the management of all railway matters.

By using the whole of the railways—which were, as already mentioned, put at the disposal of the War Railway Council—troops on the Banbury-Aylesbury line, Birmingham-Rugby line, Chester-Stafford line, Market Harborough-Bedford - Doncaster - Sheffield - Nottingham - Stamford-Huntingdon-Biggleswade line, also on the Retford-Peterborough-Cambridge line, were quickly poured into London, and by noon on June 9th 45,000 men were collected behind the left of the English position—*i.e.*, between Westerham and Woolwich—in order to be able to defend the British left flank, or to be ready to use for a counter-stroke.

(*d*) The above movements demanded all the rolling stock immediately available in the Midlands and the southern part of England.

Further instructions were issued regarding the concentration about Oxford, Banbury, Bicester, and Chipping Norton of all the available troops in England and Scotland who had not been ordered to take part in the defence of

the Guildford-Knockholt position. This concentration was to commence as soon as rolling stock became available.

In following out this idea, the cavalry, mounted infantry, and yeomanry stationed in and about Aldershot, the three regiments of yeomanry at Redhill, and the four regiments of yeomanry from Salisbury Plain, were ordered to push towards the enemy, get into touch with him, and do all that was possible to delay his advance, while the infantry brigade at Canterbury was entrained and sent to Croydon.

The rolling-stock was collected at all the junctions in England at which troops were quartered, and arrangements made for despatching them southward, but no actual moves of troops from the Midlands or the North of England took place until the evening of the 8th.

The first trains carried infantry, and no attempt was made to entrain cavalry, artillery, or yeomanry until all the infantry had been sent off.

It was not until the afternoon that the mounted troops at Salisbury, Aldershot, and

Redhill took any steps to push southward and meet the enemy. The cavalry at Canterbury, however, who were closer to Margate and Ramsgate, where the 23rd and 24th Divisions had landed, being warned in good time, were sent forward, and succeeded in considerably retarding the progress of the enemy, thus covering the retirement by rail of the infantry brigade.

As has already been stated, the cavalry cyclists of all the invading corps which had landed had pushed forward rapidly, and in most cases succeeded in covering twenty to twenty-five miles without receiving serious opposition. They were followed by the whole of the infantry cyclists of the corps to which they belonged.

By dusk on the 8th the invaders' cavalry had their outposts on the following line: Petersfield, Hindhead, Hascombe, Leith Hill, Holmwood Station, Horley, Lingfield, Cowden, Tunbridge Wells, Brenchley, Kingswood west of Lenham, Lenham, Stalisfield.

The cavalry cyclists of the Twentieth Division from Hythe, pushing up Stone Street towards Canterbury, in conjunction with those

of the Nineteenth Division, which advanced through Lenham, threatened to cut off the retreat of the cavalry brigade and yeomanry acting from Canterbury eastward, and it would have gone hard with the British had it not been that the fences in that portion of England are small and far between, so that by riding across country they were able to avoid the cyclists of the cavalry brigade, who were closely followed by the infantry cyclists of their divisions. They, however, succeeded in retiring through Faversham, which fell into the hands of the enemy, to Sittingbourne.

Portions of the battalions at Chichester and Arundel and the two battalions at Brighton succeeded in escaping by rail. Some were taken prisoners, and some, seeing that escape appeared hopeless, endeavoured to conceal their identity by changing into civilian clothes.

An incident which happened at Arundel, and which was illustrative of the methods with which the invaders treated any men suspected of bearing arms, and then endeavouring to escape the consequences of fighting by appearing to be quiet peasants or tradespeople, is worthy of note.

A father and son of the name of Martin were members of the volunteer corps, which opposed the landing at Littlehampton, and, when resistance was no longer possible, succeeded in escaping to their home in Arundel, where they were both engaged in a respectable grocer's business. The first thing they did on arriving at their house was to take off their uniform and get into civilian dress. They had hardly completed this when a German patrol came into the shop, found two Lee-Metfords which had evidently been fired that morning, and on searching the house they discovered the two men and the uniforms which had just been cast off. The men, who were both well-known and respected inhabitants of Arund ., were summarily tried and shot in the street in front of their wives and families.

These drastic measures, which were similar to those invariably resorted to in France in 1870-71, were enforced throughout the invasion of England. Our foolish leniency displayed towards the Boers under parallel circumstances found no counterpart in the action of our invaders.

CHAPTER XIII

On the night of June 8 the German troops had, as far as possible, been billeted on the inhabitants. In Germany it is the invariable custom at manœuvres for troops to be billeted. The divisional, brigade, and regimental staffs are thoroughly up in the work, know what a house will hold, and what requisitions can, without unfairness, be made on the inhabitants. They work on the rule that men should never be asked to bivouac if a roof is obtainable. Following this principle, during the Franco-Prussian War it was not, as a rule, more than one night out of a week that any unit was called upon to bivouac. The majority of the Germans consequently had a comfortable night on June 8, for it is wonderful how many people a house or barn will hold if there is no alternative between that and sleeping in the open.

Those men who were not fortunate enough to be quartered in the vicinity of any town or village sufficiently large to accommodate all, bivouacked under the excellent *tente d'abri*, a section of which every man carries on his back. This *tente d'abri* consists of a piece of waterproof canvas, about 6 feet by 3 feet, with eyelet holes bored round the edges, and with this are carried three small pieces of bamboo, on the fishing-rod principle. With a few such sections various shapes of tents are easily built. The canvas is also adapted for using as an extra mantle.

At dawn, after a good night's rest, the invader's infantry, who were all in the pink of condition, marched off, and by noon had reached the line occupied on the previous night by the infantry cyclists, who, by the time of their arrival had, as far as possible, found and told off billets and made all necessary arrangements for supplies.

Up to 2.30 in the afternoon the weather was fine, and favoured marching. At the latter hour, however, a most furious storm burst over the whole of the South of England, and it continued raining until 6 the next morning. By

the time the rain commenced, those of the German infantry who were not under shelter had already erected their *tentes d'abri*, and were comparatively comfortable.

Few of the English troops coming from a distance had been able to bring with them any sort of shelter, and their sufferings through this night were terrible, and illustrative of what all thinking men who studied the Russo-Japanese War knew must happen. All those articles most necessary for a man in a campaign must be carried on his back, but an even greater want than the *tente d'abri* soon made itself evident.

The Aldershot troops, and those regular units which had marched to the position, had brought with them on the carts provided for that purpose a proportion of entrenching implements; but this was not the case with units which had come by rail, nor, indeed, with any of the militia or volunteers. In consequence of this, a great deal of time, which might have been spent in fortifying the position, was simply wasted. Farm tools were used as far as possible, but steam-ploughs, etc., have rendered picks, spades and shovels comparatively few and far between.

Regular units in the English army carry a small proportion of tools per battalion in regimental carts. A considerably larger number is carried by the engineers of each division. An attempt had a few years previously been made to carry a small entrenching implement on the man. This implement was, however, extremely unpopular, and the attempt dropped. As in matters of State everything gave way to the effect which it would have on the political situation with regard to gaining or losing supporters for a parliamentary party, so, in the case of soldiering, the recruiting question was the governing factor. Any measure, however necessary, was not enforced if it was considered that it would have a bad effect on recruiting, and one consequence of this was that men carried neither valises nor tools.

A question of difficulty arose with regard to the English position, which was principally on downland, with steep convex slopes. Should the trenches be put on the top of the slope? This was undoubtedly the most commanding position, and the position which was most easily reinforced, but there was always much dead ground in front. Or should the trenches be at

the bottom of the slope, with all the advantage of command given away, but with no dead ground in front, and with the disadvantage incurred by the difficulty in bringing up support, and the fact staring the defenders in the face that any retirement must be in full view and fire of the enemy? or should the trenches be half-way between the top and the bottom, at the top of the steepest slope, and having in a modified extent both the advantages and disadvantages of each of the other alternatives? This tactical question was one which was solved differently by the commanders of different sections.

Taken as a whole, the entrenchment of the Downs, as is always the case with convex ground, presented great difficulties, and rendered the defence a far less easy matter than it would have appeared to be to an inexperienced eye. Another great disadvantage was that the chalk soil rendered the trenches easily observable from a great distance. It is true that attempts were made to cover them with leaves, bracken, and gorse, but the inclement weather blew these artificial coverings away, and the enemy had an easy mark to fire at.

The want of tools was very much felt, and owing to it the construction of shelter trenches for the supports, reserves, and communicating trenches, could not be attempted. In Germany, as in Japan, 50 per cent. of the men carry entrenching tools, the front rank carrying them one day, the rear rank the next day.

During the whole of the 9th the German cavalry cyclists were very busy reconnoitring, and pushed in towards our position in the most impertinent and barefaced manner. The infantry cyclists, without seriously committing themselves, on several occasions appeared to be making an attack, and, by doing so, induced the British troops to open fire and to disclose their position in those parts in which this was not known.

The Downs, which were being entrenched by our infantry, provided but few shelters in which cover from the storm could be obtained, and the very great majority of the men lay throughout the night in the open, and their condition in the morning was pitiable. There was great difficulty in getting up provisions, and after the rain fuel could neither be obtained nor improvised, and neither hot dinners on the

9th nor hot breakfasts on the 10th were procurable.

All the available artillery had been brought up on to the position; but owing to the fact, already mentioned, that field artillery is only provided for the regular units, and that the greater part of the troops holding the Dorking position were militia or volunteers, nothing like the ordinary percentage of guns per thousand men was forthcoming. The whole length of the position from right to left was, roughly speaking, thirty miles, and to defend this, as already stated, some 90,000 men, or 3,000 men per mile, were available, besides a general reserve of 45,000 men stationed behind the left flank.

Early on the morning of the 10th the attack commenced. The storm had not abated, and a strong south-easterly wind, accompanied by hail, blew into the eyes of the defenders looking south. This fact greatly favoured the attackers, and in some places enabled them to get close under the convex slopes of the Downs without suffering any serious loss. In contradistinction to the thin and loose formations which had been advocated by British tacticians after the Boer War, their advances were in

lines of single rank. At the bottom of these convex slopes they halted, and re-formed under cover.

The Germans had suffered comparatively little during the night, for though only a few had been able to obtain billets, their *tentes d'abri*, around which they had dug drains had given them a great deal of covér.

The way in which the German infantry picked up their range was very remarkable. When a company opened fire it was, as a rule, only with a few of the best shots, who fired at some auxiliary mark, such as a heap of sand or chalk near the position, and not until the range of this had been established beyond doubt by these selected shots did the company open fire. In contradistinction to this, the judging of distance and the fire of the British troops were very erratic. The reason of the greater effect of the German fire was not far to seek. In the British regular army the private fired a great many more rounds in the course of the year than did the German private, but nearly all these were fired at distances which were either known or could be accurately guessed, as the firing took place on the range. In

England there was but little ground on which field-firing could be properly carried out, and it is by field-firing, properly organized and executed, that both officers and men learn to use their fire in a manner which will give good results in war. Individual firing is learning the alphabet; field-firing is learning to read. The shooting of the militia and volunteers was, as a whole, incomparably worse than that of the regulars.

It is a well-known fact that discipline begets confidence, and confidence begets courage, and many of the auxiliary units, composed of men who would undoubtedly, had they been properly trained, have shown courage at least equal to that of any of the German battalions, seemed entirely to lose their self-possession, and in the excitement of the moment, if they adjusted their sights at all, did so most wildly, and seemed quite to forget the necessity of those few principles which they had learnt on the range.

Private John Smith, the volunteer, was probably a man of more courage and resource than his enemy, Gemeiner Johann Schmidt; but the German feared and had absolute confidence in

his superior officer, and felt certain that his comrades would continue advancing, even if he himself disgraced his company by pretending to be wounded. He also knew that if he behaved like a coward he would possibly be shot, but that even if he escaped this, he would be regarded as a laughing-stock by the men who did go on, although they were just as afraid as he was. The English volunteer, on the contrary, had not been subject to the discipline, which was the sole cause for the German being able to master his sense of fear. He had had no great confidence in the tactical acquirements of his officers, nor did he feel at all sure that his comrades would expose themselves to fire even if he did so.

This was no new lesson, for our own officers who had been in South Africa bore witness to the fact that the same irregular units, which on their arrival at the seat of war were thrown into consternation by the whistling of a few bullets, after six months' discipline proved themselves to be second to none in contempt for danger.

The statement contained in the last paragraph is borne out by the difference in this respect

between the regular and irregular units of the British force ; for, although the volunteers and militia had a larger proportion of mature men in their ranks, their discipline was not nearly so good, and the regulars showed themselves much better able to stand losses without their morale being affected.

The inclement weather and the want of proper cover and food had, moreover, taken their toll, and many of the immature boys of whom our regular battalions were composed, and of the men in soft condition who, to a great extent, filled the ranks of our volunteers and militia, were so exhausted that they were of comparatively little use.

The private in our regular battalions was paid four times as much as the private of any other European State, notwithstanding the fact that his age at joining was, on an average, just over seventeen. The regulations gave eighteen as the youngest age at which a man might be enlisted, but no birth certificate was required, and no means were taken to prevent a man giving a false age on his enlistment. To have been too particular would have prevented recruiting, and have interfered with the

pet experiments of each succeeding Secretary of State for War.

It stands to reason that these immature boys were quite incapable of withstanding the hardships which would have been as nothing to men to in the prime of life.

Napoleon said that the first quality of a soldier was endurance, and that courage came only second, for he argued that it was better to have a fairly brave man on the battle-field than a Bayard ten miles away from it, and not able to get there.

The best reason which the authorities could give for allowing the men's kits, etc., to be carried for them on waggons was that they were physically incapable of carrying them themselves, and this reason was a very true one; but such men could not be considered a satisfactory investment at the price paid for them.

Among the men holding the position were many who had never used a spade, except, perhaps, a wooden one as children on the seashore. It would have been too much to expect that a Cockney volunteer should dig as easily as a countryman, but a certain amount of training in this respect would undoubtedly have much

improved him in the use of an implement only second in importance to his rifle.

In their official report of the war in South Africa the Germans blamed us for endeavouring, on so many occasions, to manœuvre the enemy out of positions. Our answer was, that with our mobile foe, who would not wait to be killed, this plan was the only expedient one. They certainly showed the courage of their opinions in the battle of June 10, for their advance against our main position was bold, bloody, and fruitful in results. It is not our intention to minutely describe the fight which took place along the whole position, but in order to illustrate it, an account will be given of what occurred at certain points where the fighting was particularly fierce.

The attack on that part of the position between Guildford and Dorking, which was held by the Aldershot Army Corps, was carried out by the Second German Army Corps, assisted on their left by the Second Division of the Guard Corps.

Looked on as a whole, the ground from Guildford to Dorking is very strong, and, for England, quite exceptionally so.

The line taken up by the British troops was from Pewley Hill due east through Albury Downs, above Netley House, just south of Hackhurst Downs and of Oaken Grove, along the *lisière* of the wood which runs north of the railway as far as Denbies, and ending at Ash Coombe Wood.

On this position there were many places where full use could be made of artillery, and from which the field of fire was excellent.

From Gomshall to Dorking the railway-line runs mostly along a cutting, and this cutting was occupied by an advanced line of British troops, to whom it afforded a fair field of fire, good cover, and excellent lateral communication. The most dangerous part of this line was in the neighbourhood of Abinger Hammer and Leaser's Barn, at which places woods approached the railway to within a hundred yards. These woods were, soon after dawn, occupied by the Germans, and a strong fire was brought to bear on the defenders of the cutting. For some time the fight was even, but the Germans concentrated nearly the whole of the Seventh Brigade in front of these points, and, making a rush, secured the masonry bridge over the

line near Hackhurst Farm, and from it poured a strong enfilade fire down the cutting, which was thus cleared, and held by their troops.

They found it, however, impossible to advance further in face of the fearful fire poured at them from their front, and the young Aldershot troops were acquitting themselves nobly.

From Shere to Guildford the position is much weaker than is the eastern portion, and, moreover, on this flank the Second Corps had the advantage of being aided by the Second Guard Division.

The Sixth Brigade was the first to attack Shere, and the much more wooded nature of the country here rendered close approach far more easy.

Albury Park and Shere were heavily attacked, as also was Weston Wood.

The Fourth Guard Brigade came up by 6.30 a.m. to the assistance of the Sixth Brigade, and, after some heavy street fighting, almost, but not quite, gained possession of the village of Shere.

One company of the Rutlandshire Regiment still gallantly held out.

Street and village fighting during the Franco-Prussian War often proved that a locality in which a footing was still held was infinitely easier to retake than if this had not been the case, and the gallant action of this company did much to assist in the recapture of Shere.

About 7 a.m. the state of things in Weston Wood was no better than about Shere. Moreover, the Fifth German Brigade possessed itself of the high ground near St. Martha's Chapel on the Pilgrims' Way, and from it dominated the British position between Pewley Hill and Albury Downs. Things here looked bad for the British, when the commander of the Guildford-Dorking section of the defence ordered up the brigade which he had in general reserve at East Clandon, and this immediately put another complexion on matters.

The German successes in this part of the field were, to a great extent, attributable to the fact that the English artillery, which on the east of the position had given the defence a great advantage over the attack, was here of but little use on account of the more wooded nature of the country; but, as already stated, the counter-

attack by the 105th Brigade turned the tables, and our gallant troops, charging down the hill, showed that when it came to hand-to-hand fighting, the English boy was at least equal to the Teuton man.

The German attack between Shere and Guildford was repulsed with heavy loss. Attempts were later made to renew it, but unsuccessfully, and the eventual retirement of the Aldershot Army Corps was entirely attributable to the line having been pierced in other places.

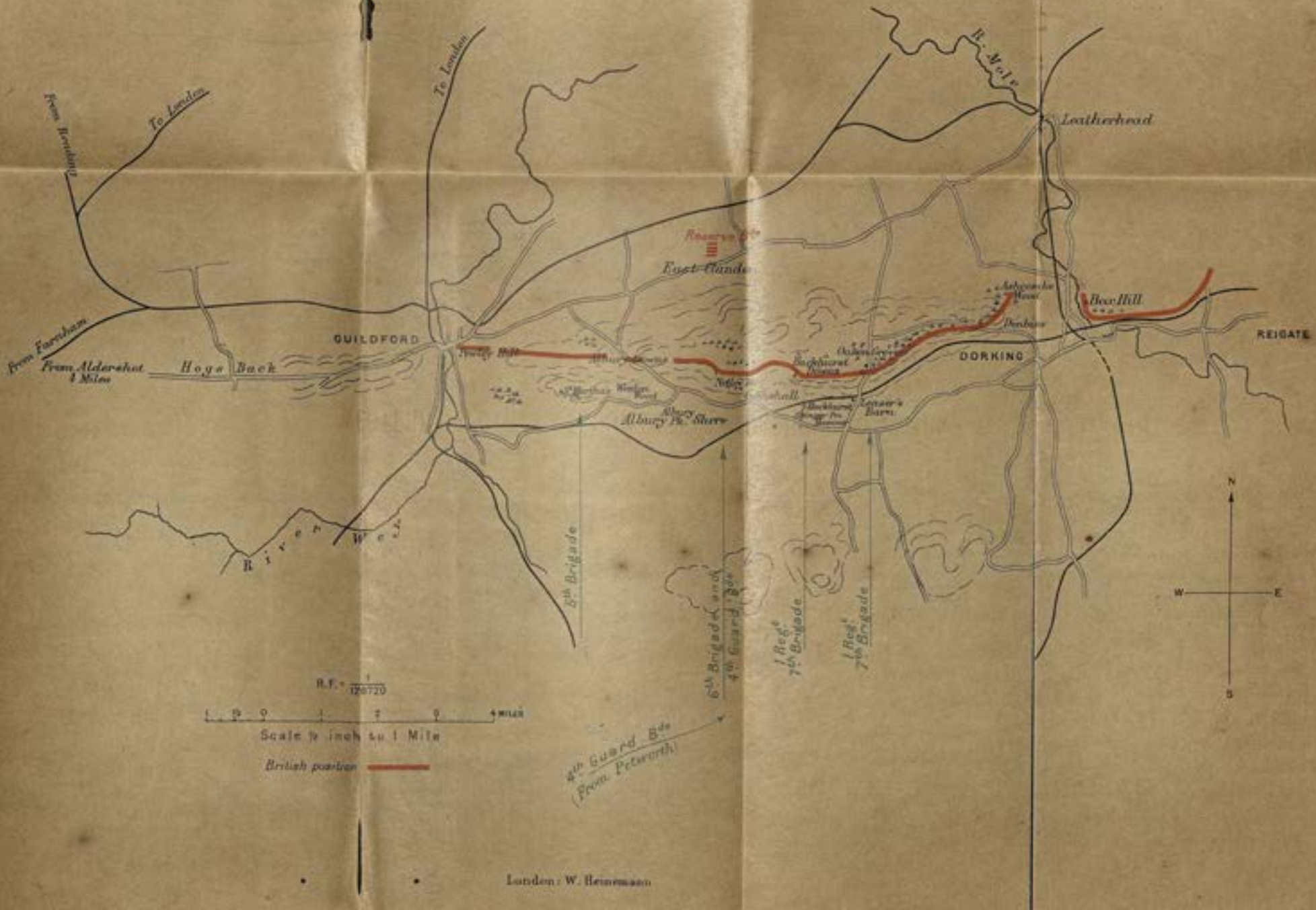
Another severe fight took place in the neighbourhood of Brockham. The Eighth Brigade, forming part of the Fourth Division, advanced viâ Holmwood on to Brockham, and attacked the slopes between Boxhill and Brockham Warren.

The attack of the Eighth Brigade was assisted by that of the Seventh Brigade on their left, which deployed against the heights south of Ranmore Common, and by that of the Thirteenth Brigade, which attacked the heights north of Buckland, and the Fourteenth Brigade, which moved direct on Reigate.

Moving through the grounds of Betchworth

WESTERN SECTION OF GUILDFORD-KNOCKHOLT POSITION

MAP B. *to face page 126.*



London: W. Heinemann

Park, which gave a considerable amount of cover, the infantry of the 200th Regiment succeeded in rushing the bridge over the River Mole, and in driving out of the railway cutting in front of it the weak party of volunteers by which it was held.

The woods to the north run almost down to the railway-line, and by massing troops in the cutting, and bringing a cross-fire to bear on the apex of the angle presented by these woods which are south of Brockham Warren, they succeeded in subduing the British fire to such an extent that they were able to rush across the field which intervened between them and the wood. This point was well chosen, for it was very difficult for the British to bring any artillery to bear on the German attack on this part of the position. Once in the wood, attackers and defenders were on equal terms, or, if anything, the advantage was on the side of the attack, although they had to push up hill, for the invaders had on their side the morale which is always an asset on the side of the attack, besides which their discipline soon began to tell.

The Germans were all men in the prime of

life, and in hard condition. The volunteers comprised men of all ages.

Reserves on the British side were brought up, and on one occasion it appeared as if success would crown their efforts, but a small quarry, in which a German company had been told to take up a defensive position in case of a temporary reverse, held out, and stemmed the tide of the British advance until German reinforcements again brought about a British retirement.

The scene on this part of the field was bloody, and the German losses were severe, but once in the wood, they succeeded in reaching the crest.

The Eighteenth Brigade, which attacked Brockham Hill and the slopes south of Pebble Coombe (about a mile north-east of Brockham Warren), also had a stiff fight. Advancing viâ Leigh and Betchworth village, they drove the English out of the slight railway cutting near the station, which they occupied.

The hills on this part of the British position were very convex, and the selection of the best positions for the trenches was a matter of great difficulty.

The Germans from the cutting found it easy to get the proper range of the chalk slopes, for, besides being excellent judges of distance, the splash of the bullets guided them. With the British volunteers the matter was different. They ought undoubtedly to have measured, and by firing to have checked the distance to the railway whilst constructing their trenches. They had, however, omitted to take either of these precautions, the excuses given being that the precipitous nature of the ground rendered it very difficult to pace at all accurately, and that the grassy slopes near the cutting made it next to impossible to mark the splash of a bullet.

The men had been little practised in visual judging of distance, which did not appeal to them nearly so much as did target practice, although it was at least equally important, and the mekometers were known to be inaccurate. This instrument worked well in the hands of experts if continually tested, but it was next to impossible to obtain correct results with it under fire.

The trenches were on the side of the hill, and to push supports into them was to expose

these to a terrible fire (see diagram on Map A). Such were the consequences of placing the British trenches on the hillside. On this convex ground a position at the top or at the bottom of the slope would have had disadvantages at least as great.

The Germans massed men in the cutting, from which a line suddenly rose and moved in quick time towards the British position in front of them.

During the first sixty yards of their advance their comrades from the cutting were obliged to cease fire; but as the ground then gave them cover from this fire, it was again re-opened, and the British volunteers were careful in exposing their heads. On reaching the bottom of the steeper slopes (point X on the diagram on Map A) the Germans were under cover, and were not again visible to the British until they were within thirty yards of the trenches, which they rushed with the bayonet.

The British had endeavoured to send supports into the trenches, but their losses over the open ground leading down to them were so severe that but few men succeeded in getting into them, and Pebble Coombe was taken.

The position was also broken to the north of Limpsfield. The Seventeenth Brigade of the Ninth Division moved from the south on Godstone and Caterham; the Eighteenth Brigade through Lingfield and Tandridge on Oxted; the Twentieth Brigade through Edenbridge and Westerham on to Tatsfield. A most determined attack was delivered by the Nineteenth Brigade, which moved from the south on to Limpsfield and Titsey. A few British troops lightly occupied, but were easily driven out of, Limpsfield Village. The Germans then pushed up the covered and wooded ground towards the Grange, which afforded but a bad field of fire to the defence, and succeeded in reaching the heights to the north of Titsey Park though they lost severely in doing so.

The British position was thus pierced in three places, and by 9 a.m. the greater part of the crest line was in possession of the enemy.

CHAPTER XIV

It is now time to consider what the Salisbury column and the reserve had been doing.

The Salisbury column had reached the line—Farnham, Kingsley, Selborne, East Tisted—and had bivouacked at these places on the night of the 9th. The Salisbury troops had started with their tents, but as they did not commence marching until noon, and marched until it was dark, their second line transport could not reach them by nightfall, the road space being required for the fighting part of the force. It must be borne in mind that the fighting part of a division alone requires some five miles on a single road.

The march was resumed at dawn, but was at once opposed. The troops of the First and Second Divisions of the German Guard Corps had taken up a position, with their centre on

Hindhead, their right on the Hog's Back and Crooksbury Hill, and their left in the neighbourhood of Petersfield. The object of the Germans was less to defeat the Salisbury column than to hinder its advance, and this they most successfully did.

Attention has been called to the fact that English country lends itself excellently to delaying action, and the Germans seemed to have studied and made full use of this peculiarity. In this respect, indeed, they were in no way inferior to the English troops; and, as a matter of fact, they had no less experience than the latter of how to work over ordinary English ground.

Such manœuvres as were yearly held by troops of the Aldershot and Salisbury commands invariably took place on the down or heather land, of which, perhaps, a twentieth part of England consists, and not on the fields intersected by hedges, or in the woods which comprise the other nineteen-twentieths. The compensation which would have been demanded was too great to admit of this. Damage for which £5 would have been considered ample remuneration were it the consequence of the

fox-hounds having visited the cover was estimated at £25 by the shooting tenant when the Government was asked to pay, and when the damage was caused in teaching men to defend their country. The Manœuvre Act had never been rigidly enforced, as to do so would have been unpopular, and punished at the next election.

The Commander-in-Chief of the English forces had confidently expected that his troops would have been able to hold the Guildford-Westerham position for many hours, if not for one or two days, and until the Salisbury column was able to make itself felt on, and perhaps drive in, the enemy's left. His estimates were based on the great resistance which the Russians in Manchuria had offered in circumstances more or less similar, for in the Far East entrenched positions had shown great delaying power, even when held with inferior numbers; but numbers are not everything, and only our best regular troops were fit to be compared with these Russians in endurance and the way they took punishment.

The superior intelligence and imagination of our auxiliary troops, which was not combined

with discipline, only added to their incapacity for bearing heavy losses.

The Second Corps, consisting of the Third and Fourth Divisions, the Seventh and Eighth Divisions of the Fourth Corps, the Ninth and Tenth Divisions of the Fifth Corps, and the Seventeenth Division, comprised the troops which had been directed against the British front.

The cyclists of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, and Fortieth Divisions had made good use of their time on the 9th, and by 6 a.m. on the 10th had succeeded in firmly establishing themselves on the high ground north of Wrotham, including Highfield, Wrotham Hill, Kingsdown, Stansted, and Upper Halling. This high ground had been picketed by troops drawn from the general reserve, but was not prepared against an attack by 20,000 men, and its capture jeopardized the line of retreat from the English main position on London. The general reserve, nominally consisting of 45,000 men, was therefore pushed up to the valley of the River Darent as a protection against a hostile turning movement.

The words 'nominally consisting of 45,000

men' have been used advisedly; for although that number had been railed to the south-east of London, not more than 40,000 were available to meet the enemy, and these men had in most cases lost the headquarters of the units to which they belonged. The reason for this state of things was as follows:

The country about St. Mary's Cray, Swanley Junction, Chelsfield, and Farnborough, to which localities the general reserve of 45,000 men were railed through London from the Midlands, was thickly populated, and able, without difficulty, to accommodate a force of this size, but no arrangements were made by the authorities for trying to billet the troops, and nothing except food had been sent by rail to the places where it was intended they should bivouac.

As previously stated, on the afternoon of the 8th, a storm of exceptional violence broke over the whole of the South of England. It was quite impossible for the men in the open to cook the provisions which had been sent to them, and no shelter was provided. As a matter of fact, nearly all of them did eventually get under cover, as the inhabitants took compassion on the defenders of their country,

but there was no order; troops of different corps became huddled together in the same house, and terrible confusion was the consequence.

Throughout this campaign the Germans were much better sheltered and provided with food than were our own men.

During manœuvres in Germany it is the rule, and not the exception, for troops to be billeted. A staff officer allots a certain village, or half of a certain town, to a regiment. This is divided by the regimental staff between battalions, and the Quartermaster of each battalion walks round the part allotted to him, and chalks on the door of each house the company and the number of men that are to be billeted in it. In a country with a national army, such as Germany, the inhabitants always do their best for the men quartered on them, feeling that in doing so they are feeding their own sons, and do not mind if their expenses are not absolutely covered by the remuneration they receive from Government, as manœuvres do not come often to the same town.

Neither the British Staff nor the inhabitants were trained to this procedure, and a system

could not be improvised on the spur of the moment. The invaders, on the contrary, worked in England just as they would have done in Germany.

Unwilling as they were to house the invaders, the inhabitants, when ordered to feed them, could not poison them, and were constrained to acknowledge that the individuals behaved themselves, on the whole, very well as long as the rules laid down were obeyed. If they were disobeyed the punishment was drastic.

But to return to the narrative of the events of June 10.

CHAPTER XV

THE cyclists who had seized the ground above Wrotham had, by 9.30 a.m., been reinforced by the infantry of the division to which they belonged, and at this hour the situation was as follows:

The English main position had been pierced at five or six different places, and by 10 a.m. was throughout in the hands of the enemy. The Salisbury column was checked on the line between Petersfield, Hindhead, and Farnham.

The troops which had originally been intended for a general reserve, wherewith to make a counter-stroke, were holding the line of the River Darent, but by the fall of the main position their right flank was threatened, and a retreat, not ordered by their commanders, commenced, and soon became a debacle. By 11 a.m. the whole country between Dartford,

Shoreham, Caterham, and Dorking was covered with panic-stricken men pouring towards London and absolutely disorganized.

The ground between Dorking and Guildford, which had been held by the Aldershot Army Corps, had been gallantly defended. This portion of the position was not more adapted to defence than was the remainder, but the officers commanding sections had known their duty, and the men stood to their positions with much greater steadfastness.

By this time, seeing that the situation was lost, the general officer commanding ordered the Aldershot Army Corps to retire on Reading, nor did he do this one bit too soon, for the cyclists which the Guard Corps had been able to spare were working round his right flank, and had he stayed much longer would have jeopardized his withdrawal. The Aldershot Army Corps retired defeated, but not disgraced.

The various regular units along the rest of the position had also done much to keep up the tradition of the British soldier, though in most cases they paid the price of their temerity.

The cyclists of the Third and Fourth

Divisions were ordered to harass and endeavour, by moving round their right flank, to intercept the march of the Aldershot Army Corps in its attempt to move north-west. In the latter object they did not succeed, but they compelled the Army Corps to hasten its march, and this decimated its ranks. The poor boys of whom the battalions were largely composed were worn out by the fatigue they had endured, and fell out by hundreds.

CHAPTER XVI

It may be well here to consider the reasons for the British collapse.

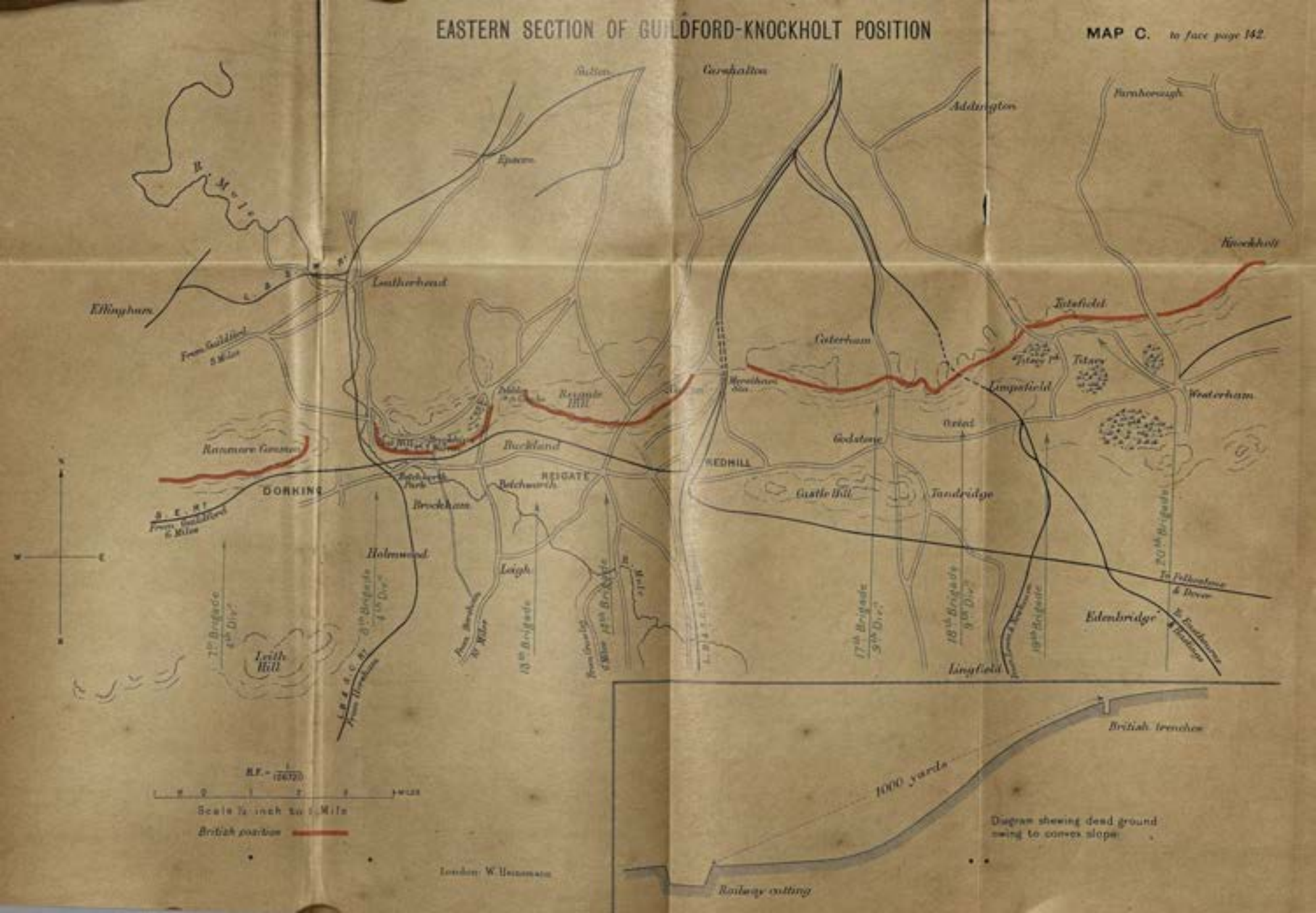
In olden days British troops had exhibited more endurance, had taken more punishment, and had shown more dash and fierce courage, than those of any Continental nation. By what was this change effected?

Firstly, it was due to our ridiculous sense of security. We saw nothing. Like the ostrich, if there was anything disagreeable to see, the English nation buried its head.

We do not believe that our men were individually less brave than those of the invader. On the contrary, innumerable instances can be brought to prove that, when in a dilemma in private life, the Englishman shows more resource and more courage than does the Teuton. How many young Englishmen who have been

EASTERN SECTION OF GUILDFORD-KNOCKHOLT POSITION

MAP C. *to face page 142.*



educated in Germany can bear witness to the fact that they consider two Englishman as the equal of at least half a dozen Germans in a rough-and-tumble! The young Englishman is usually more active, more resourceful, and has more dash.

Why was it that the German soldier, on this field of battle, proved himself so superior to the English?

The answer is: Because Germany gave her best to her army, and trusted her honour to the pick of her population, whose pride it was to consider themselves capable of bearing arms. These men served their country during the first years after they reached maturity. We, on the contrary, had taught our people to despise the profession of arms. We went to the by-ways and hedges to beg for men, and, after paying them highly, only got boys, so weak that it was impossible to properly instruct them, as they were physically incapable of standing a whole day's work.

Many wiseacres were at pains to point out, after the South African War, that much of the best work during that arduous campaign was performed by such irregular troops as Austra-

lians, New Zealanders, and Canadians, and tried to deduce from this that irregulars were as good as regular troops. There is, however, a slight difference between a Queenslander who has earned his livelihood in the Bush by shooting kangaroos, and a London Cockney, although they may be brothers, and both inherit the same instincts. The Australian larrikin (town-bred boy) was little better than the young Englishman.

The Australian Bushman had, in his ordinary pursuits, developed to a high degree most of the qualities necessary for a soldier, and men living under the conditions under which Bushmen had been brought up were quick to see the necessity for strict discipline in essential matters, although it must be confessed that the routine of barrack life was extremely irksome to them.

A long period of peace, as far as a really great war was concerned, had made our moral muscles grow slack. The small wars against savages, in which we were continually engaged, had acted banefully, and not well, on our army and on our nation.

In the evening papers one often saw:

'Terrible Battle,' 'Splendid English Victory,' 'Ten Thousand of the Enemy Killed; British Losses—One Captain Killed, One Subaltern, and Ten Men Wounded.' This is what we were used to."

The howl that took place at Lord Methuen's early battles in the Boer War, in which he boldly attacked an enemy also armed with a modern rifle, will not easily be forgotten.

We had grown accustomed to the idea that we could make omelettes without breaking eggs.

A long peace and over-civilization had resulted in an exaggerated value being placed upon human life. This feeling cannot be regarded as having been moral. It was rather the consequence of a want of belief than of too much. Those nations with a religion in which they implicitly believe are always the most prodigal of their lives. In young and healthy nations a coward is despised, and it is the chief object of every young man to try to prove that he is brave, and in some primitive tribes no man is allowed to propagate his species until he has succeeded in showing himself to be so. We bred our horses and our

dogs for such points as speed and courage, but in looking for mates for our sons and our daughters the only point we looked for was wealth.

No nation values life more than does the effeminate and degenerate population of Hindustan, which for centuries has been the prey of more virile peoples.

In spite of its horrors, war brings out the finest qualities of mankind. Courage, self-sacrifice, devotion to duty, unselfishness, and determination, are qualities which in war play a daily part, and which, by being practised, become a second nature.

A defeat has been the saving of many nations, as the rod has saved many a boy. Take, for example, Jena and the Tugenbund, which was its consequence, and which, by preaching frugality and manly virtues, raised a degenerate Prussia from the dust to be a leader among nations. May we learn our lesson and rise again from our defeat.

England was governed by faddists, who could see nothing but their own fad, and chose to think that by saying there was no necessity for an army they could pre-

vent wars. They dreamt of a millennium peopled with millionaires. The millionaires were forthcoming ; the millennium was further distant than at almost any time in our history.

CHAPTER XVII

It will be well now to turn to the movements of the forces in East Anglia.

On the east coast landings were completed by the evening of June 8 by the 23rd Division at Clacton, by the 24th Division at Aldeburgh, by the 33rd Division at Southwold, and by the 34th Division at Lowestoft.

It has since transpired that it was the intention to march these different divisions on London by different, but parallel, routes, in supporting distance of each other. The 23rd Division was to march viâ Colchester, Maldon, and Brentwood; the 24th from Aldeburgh, viâ Wickham Market, Ipswich, Horkesley, Marks Tey, Witham, and Epping; the 33rd from Southwold, viâ Halesworth, Debenham, Stowmarket, Sudbury, Braintree, and Hertford; the 34th from Lowestoft, viâ Bungay,

Harleston, Bury St. Edmunds, Long Melford, Haverhill, Saffron Walden, etc.

By the evening of June 8 the cavalry cyclists of these columns had pushed on respectively to the neighbourhood of the following places:

Those of the 23rd Division, who had been opposed by the mounted troops from Colchester, had succeeded in establishing themselves near Wivenhoe Park and Ardleigh; those of the 24th Division in the neighbourhood of Ipswich; those of the 33rd Division close to Debenham; and those of the 34th Division almost as far as Diss. The infantry cyclists were, as a rule, some five or six miles behind their cavalry comrades.

The same provisions for living on the country and obtaining transport and horses were made in East Anglia as had been made on the south coast.

The points at which troops in the East of England were located on the outbreak of hostilities have been given on p. 84.

In all, at Colchester, Cambridge, Bury St. Edmunds, and Clacton, one cavalry brigade,

four regiments of Imperial Yeomanry, three Field and one Horse Artillery batteries, one regular infantry brigade, sixteen militia battalions, and seven volunteer battalions, were collected; but of these latter, the two volunteer battalions which had taken part in the fight at Clacton had been severely handled, and their fighting efficiency was much shaken.

Immediately on hearing of the landing at Clacton, the General Officer Commanding at Colchester despatched his mounted troops to hinder their advance, and was on the point of marching with the whole of the remaining force at his disposal against the invaders, when he received notice of the three other landings on the east coast, and thereon decided to endeavour to obtain further information, and await instructions before committing himself.

In the afternoon he received orders from London to concentrate all the troops of the Eastern command above enumerated, and to take up the best defensive position he could, with the object of barring the advance, or falling on the flank, of the enemy. The position he selected was one on the right bank of the River Stour, between Long Melford and

Sudbury, where the troops coming from Bury St. Edmunds, Cambridge, and Colchester could be easily concentrated. After ordering his mounted troops to delay the enemy as far as possible, and when driven back to join him, he railed or marched the remainder of the force collected at Colchester to Sudbury, in the neighbourhood of which place he had by that evening collected some 22,000 men. These numbers did not include the cavalry brigade and Imperial Yeomanry acting with them from Colchester.

During the 9th a position, with its left near West End Hall, west of Long Melford, and running along the River Stour as far as its junction with the Belchamp Brook, and thence to the neighbourhood of Belchamp Walter, was taken up and entrenched. The front of this position was about four and a half miles (see Map D).

The morning of the 9th was not far advanced when the invader's cyclists of the 23rd Division, assisted by those of the 24th Division, had succeeded in driving in or working round the flanks of the British cavalry and yeomanry to such an extent as to be able definitely to

ascertain that this position was being held and entrenched.

Marching at dawn, the infantry of the different divisions pushed on, and by noon had covered some fifteen miles on the respective roads allotted to them.

By 9 a.m. the infantry of the 23rd Division had reached Colchester, and were proceeding to get into billets, when the officer commanding the division received reports from the cyclists who had located the British position. About the same hour orders through wireless telegraphy along the coast came to hand ordering him to collect all the forces he could and attack the enemy without hesitation or delay should opportunity occur, as it was the Commander-in-Chief's wish to deal the English forces as many blows as possible before entering the capital.

In the circumstances, after allowing his men to have a meal, he pushed on another nine miles, and bivouacked near Bures St. Mary. He at the same time communicated with the Generals commanding the other divisions, informing them of his intention to attack the Long Melford-Sudbury position on the morrow,

and desiring them to put the whole of their infantry cyclists at his disposal for this purpose.

The storm which raged over the South of England on the afternoon and night of the 9th was not quite so severe in the Eastern Counties, but was still sufficient to cause great distress to those of the troops who had no shelter, as was the case with some of the battalions occupying the British position.

The general line taken up by the British has already been given. That part of it covered by the River Stour was held by eight battalions of militia, with four battalions in local reserve at Foxearth. The right of the position and the junction of the Belchamp Brook with the Stour was held by seven volunteer battalions, with four militia battalions in local reserve near Borley Green. A regular infantry brigade was kept in general reserve near Hobart's Hill.

The infantry and the infantry cyclists of the 23rd Division of the invaders, 12,000 strong, crossed the Stour at Bures St. Mary, and marched against the British right extended along the Belchamp Brook. The cyclists of the 33rd Division were told off to attack the

British front from Long Melford to the junction of the streams. The cyclists of the 34th Division were ordered to try to get round the British left flank viâ Cavendish or Clare. The cavalry cyclists of the Twelfth Army Corps and of the 23rd Division were ordered to operate round the British right.

The British position, although perhaps the best in a country particularly devoid of good positions, was weak. Its front along the Stour was, it is true, rendered stronger by the swollen state of the river, but most of the slopes leading down to it were convex, and the position had all the inherent weaknesses attending this formation. Nevertheless for a certain time Fortune seemed to smile on the British.

Four thousand cyclists of the 33rd Division, leaving their cycles behind them, succeeded in bridging the Stour, which, owing to the convex ground, was not visible from the trenches just in front of it, and some 2,000 men had crossed, when a battery, which galloped up in the face of a withering infantry fire, succeeded in destroying the bridge which had been built across the stream.

A local counter-attack of the militia holding

that section of the defence was thoroughly successful, and practically the whole of the force which had crossed the stream was either killed or taken prisoners, the arms being at once thrown into the swollen Stour by the exultant militiamen.

The bridges at Cavendish and Clare, as well as those for ten miles up the River Stour, had been destroyed, and as the cyclists of the 34th Division moved up the left bank, they were followed by the British yeomanry on the right bank, who were moving on the inner lines, and had not so far to travel.

On the British left and left centre things were going well. The British right was first opposed by the four cyclist battalions of the 23rd Division who acted as advanced guard, and, crossing the river at Bures St. Mary, marched viâ Ballingdon, where they deployed, and attacked that part of the British force which lined the Belchamp Brook. They were supported by four battalions of infantry ; four were kept in reserve.

The volunteers fought well. The entrenchments they had made in the soft and easily-entrenched Essex soil were strong, and the

invaders could make little headway, and for a time things augured well for us.

This was the state of affairs when the Germans sent out the four battalions they had in reserve to their left, and the four regular battalions composing the British general reserve were sent out to the right almost simultaneously.

There was an intricate piece of ground not far from Over Hall, on the proper occupation of which a very great deal depended. The British wished to occupy it to protect their right, and the Germans to protect their left flank. The necessity for holding this ground appeared to strike each of the opposing commanders simultaneously, and the distance to be traversed by each in order to reach it was some three and a half miles. The ground which the Germans intended to occupy was at the time in the possession of some cyclists; that which the British commander was making for, and was opposite to it, was in the possession of some yeomanry. The British battalions marched to the ground in the ordinary way, the officers marching with their units. The German commander, on the contrary, galloped

on himself, and took with him all his battalion and company commanders, who were all mounted on the Essex and Suffolk hunt horses. On getting up to the ground, the commander decided on the general line to be taken up, and divided it between his battalion commanders, who likewise apportioned it among their Captains. By the time the battalions actually came up, some three-quarters of an hour after the mounted officers had arrived there, everything was organized and arranged. The proper way to hold the position had been thought out, and the different companies were met by their Captains, who, in the meantime, had carefully studied and noted how to take advantage of every fold of the ground, and each company was directed straight on to the section of ground that it was intended that it should hold.

The English Captains were not mounted, and on arriving at the ground with their companies, had hurriedly to take up their position. They were consequently not able to study the ground, and the best line was not the one which was held.

It is true that the Commanding Officers and Adjutants had ridden on in front, but it was

impossible for these officers alone to settle on the exact line to be occupied by each company commander in the intricate ground, which required much studying.

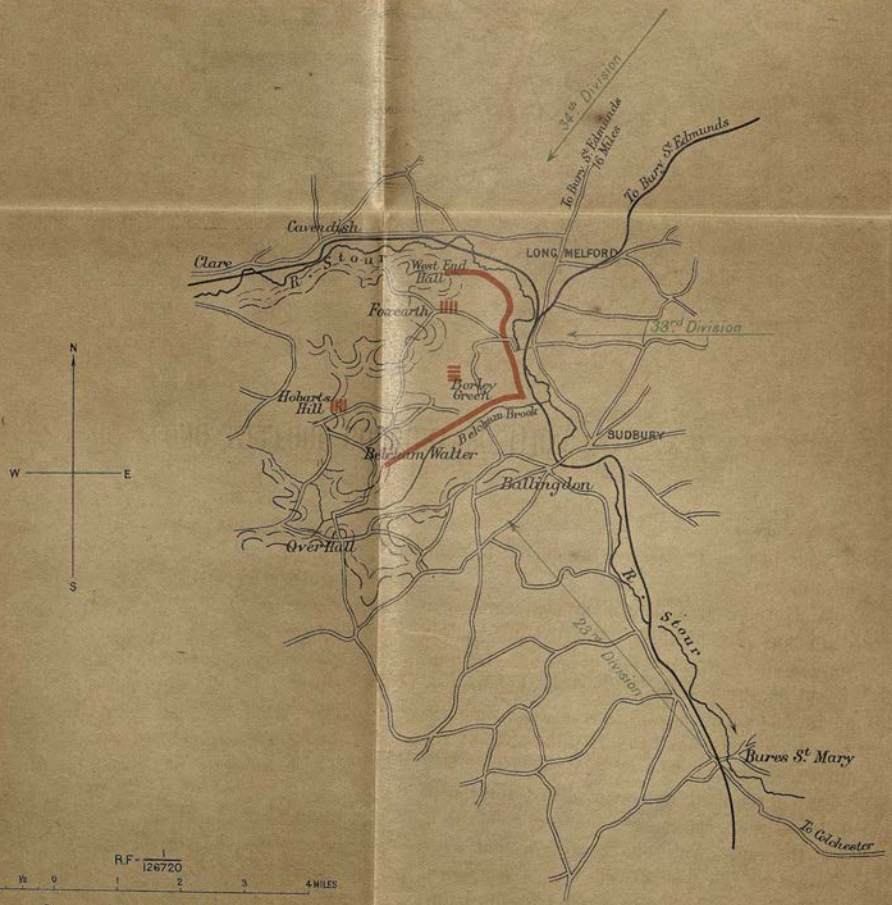
The battalions opposed to the Germans fought excellently, but no heroism could make up for the faults of their line, which, being enfiladed, was broken in the centre, and the British regular brigade was driven back. The position was turned, and the battle lost. That it was lost was entirely the fault of our organization.

A German battalion is divided into four companies, decentralized to an extent which is impossible with our eight-company system. Each of the four company commanders is mounted. The advantages of this organization were only too forcibly illustrated by the Battle of Sudbury.

When the flank was once turned, the troops holding the position precipitately vacated it, and the retirement soon became a rout when pressed by the cyclists, for it is a retirement more than anything else which tries discipline, and demands thoroughly trained troops for its proper execution.

LONG MELFORD-SUDBURY POSITION

MAP D. *to face page 158.*



London: W. Heinemann

CHAPTER XVIII

Noon on June 10 saw two defeated British armies.

The cavalry and yeomanry of the East Anglian army succeeded in considerably delaying the direct advance of the German troops, the intersected country of Essex being specially favourable to such action.

As has been stated, the passages on the right bank of the River Stour, on the left of the British position, were held by yeomanry, but the opposite bank was in possession of the enemy. The cyclists of the 23rd Division, originally employed on the attack on Belchamp Brook, after the retreat had commenced worked round the British right, and forced the retirement to take a northerly direction towards the River Stour. A long and sanguinary fight ensued. The German troops were tired, and

no longer worked with the dash which had been characteristic of their early morning attacks, or they would have made prisoners of the whole demoralized English; but even as it was, the British casualties included 1,500 killed and 7,000 wounded and unwounded prisoners.

The situation on the south coast was even worse, for the Aldershot Army Corps and the troops from Salisbury Plain were the only integral portions of the British army to the south of London which had left the battle-field as formed units, ready to fight again.

From all other parts of the position disorganized masses poured towards London in panic-stricken flight, but there were a few notable exceptions to this rule. Among these were the two batteries of artillery which had been posted on Reigate Hill, and had remained true to the traditions of their corps, and they covered the flight of the volunteers and remained in action until 50 per cent. of their men were killed. An attempt was then made to retire them. Two guns and four waggons succeeded in getting away, the horses of the other guns were shot, and ten guns were captured. Horses which had been collected on

the way from the coast were brought up, and with those of the teams which were not seriously wounded, put into the guns.

Two battalions of militia, which only left London as the retreat had begun, had detrained at Sutton, and took up the best position they could to the south of that town.

The ten guns above mentioned were now brought up by the Germans, and shelled the town of Sutton for half an hour. The scenes which followed were indescribable, for although no great amount of damage was done by the shells, several parts of the town were set on fire, and the effect on the inhabitants of all ages and sexes was such that the commander of the militia was begged to desist from further resistance.

It is unnecessary to dwell further on this deplorable chapter of our history. Suffice it to say that on the afternoon of June 10 over 60,000 men fell into the hands of the invaders south of London. The actual losses in killed and wounded on the position itself during the battle had not been very great, but during the retreat casualties had been far more numerous.

CHAPTER XIX

UNTIL the morning of June 11 the railways to the north of London were still open, and crowded trains ran all the night of June 10.

During this night all the bullion at the Bank of England and in minor banks was sent to the north.

At midnight a Cabinet Council was held in Downing Street, and it was then decided to send a deputation, consisting of the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Lord Mayor of London, to confer with the invader, and to find out what terms he demanded. It was known that the British fleet would, in all probability, regain supremacy of the seas within fourteen days; but it was now apparent to our Ministers that the supremacy of the seas would not necessarily mean an end of our troubles.

Negotiations were opened, and a meeting with the invading commander was arranged for 9 a.m. on June 11 at Croydon. The interview was not a long one. His terms were £500,000,000, a safe conduct back to Germany, and an assurance that peace should be proclaimed on the day that the last German troops left England, and that hostilities should not be reopened for twelve months from that date. Twenty-four hours was given for the consideration of these terms.

There was an inclination to at once reject them as impossible, but on second thoughts the deputation considered there would be no use in doing this.

The German commander went on to say that his cyclists were already *en route* to points north of London, and that by noon he would be in possession of all the roads and railways leading from the capital. He stated that, in the circumstances, it was within his power to stop any food coming into London, but that he was making war against the Government, and not against the inhabitants. He said that, if obliged to do so as a military measure, he would not hesitate to

starve the whole population of the Metropolis, but that he would be very loth to take such a step, and that he would, therefore, for the present, allow foodstuffs to be brought into London on the one condition that his troops should be fed first.

The English deputies had no alternative but to submit to this condition, and steps were at once taken to put it into force. They also agreed to provide railway accommodation, and run trains for the conveyance of the prisoners taken by the Germans to New Shoreham, Brighton, Newhaven, and Seaford. On their arrival at these places the embarkation of the prisoners was at once commenced.

The situation which presented itself to a Cabinet Council, held on the afternoon of June 11, was as follows:

The enemy was in full possession of London, and the four millions it contained were only fed by their permission. The foodstuff in London itself would suffice to supply the population for five or six days at the outside.

The Salisbury column had, after the capture of the British main position on the 10th, been ordered to retire towards Salisbury. The

Aldershot Army Corps was retiring on Reading. This corps had suffered severely, but the combined columns now mustered some 65,000 men; half of these, however, were militia or volunteers, and the proceedings of June 10 did not inspire confidence in auxiliaries.

The whole of the railways, except in the south and in the east of London, were still in our possession, and within a week a large army could be collected and marched on the capital. This would oblige the enemy to concentrate. One great objection to this course, however, existed in the fact that Woolwich and Enfield were in the hands of the enemy, and ammunition was scarce.

As long as the arrangement agreed upon with the German Commander-in-Chief was continued, there was no fear of the population of London starving, but if his terms were definitely refused, and armies assembled in other parts of England, there was a possibility of the enemy altering his conditions, although by doing so he would deprive himself of supplies from the sources from which he was obtaining them. He had, however, collected large quantities of the necessaries of

life, and there was no doubt that the inhabitants would feel the pinch of hunger before he did so.

It was thought, however, that if an army could be collected and marched down to threaten London from the north within a week, it was perfectly possible that the enemy would not alter his terms regarding supplies nntil two or three days of that week had elapsed. In this case the inhabitants would probably manage to live out the remainder of the week on the provisions in London, and if the god of battles then gave the victory to the English all would be regained, and the annihilation or surrender of the 250,000 German invaders only a question of time and of the return of the fleet.

All that would be necessary would be to oblige them to concentrate and remain stationary, in which circumstances no country, however rich, could for long maintain them, and hunger would complete their defeat.

At 8.30 a.m. on June 12 the German commander received a refusal to his terms.

His answer was that he intended to advance a strong detachment on London, that if not

resisted this detachment would do no harm to the lives of the inhabitants; but that if resisted, a heavy price would be exacted.

Keeping one squadron of cavalry cyclists and one battalion of infantry cyclists with them, the columns advancing from the east had sent on the remainder of their cyclists towards London, and on the morning of the 12th the following was the line occupied by the Germans:

Gravesend, Wrotham, Westerham, Caterham, Epsom, Weybridge, Englefield Green, Uxbridge, Harrow, Edgware, Enfield, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Romford, Rainham.

The infantry of the corps which had marched from the south coast were kept concentrated on the south of London, the posts to the north being manned entirely by cyclists. From their ubiquity these impressed the inhabitants with the idea that their numbers were much greater than they really were.

CHAPTER XX

At noon on the 12th 4,000 cyclists from Sutton, and the same number from Kingston, advanced on London with all due military precautions. Orders had been given that opposition to their advance would only cause unnecessary bloodshed, and they reached the neighbourhood of the city without opposition. Arrived there, they proceeded to surround that piece of London enclosed between the following streets: Cheapside, King William Street, Cannon Street, St. Paul's Churchyard.

This having been performed, all inhabitants were told to go out of this enclave, but were not allowed to take anything with them. The houses were then searched, to see that no persons remained behind. It is related that a German soldier, found putting some silver spoons into his pocket, was tried summarily by

court-martial and shot within half an hour. The nation which did not hesitate to bring on an unjust war, and to exact an indemnity of hundreds of millions, would not allow discipline to be jeopardized by the theft of five shillings.

Gresham Street, St. Martin's-le-Grand, Newgate Street, Queen Victoria Street, Upper Thames Street, Eastcheap, were also picketed.

The police were then told that it was the German commander's intention to burn to the ground that piece of London which he had surrounded, and requested that the fire brigade might be warned of his intention, as he would allow them to assist in preventing the fire spreading to any of the buildings which he had not been ordered to destroy. When once arrived on the spot preliminary arrangements did not take long, and by 4 p.m. this block, one of the richest and most important in the City of London, was in flames. By 7 p.m. it was practically destroyed, and the troops were marched away, the fire brigade being allowed to do their best to save the little that could be saved.

The German Commander-in-Chief was well advised in choosing that part of London which

he did for destruction. If he had chosen some fashionable streets in the West End some people would in all probability have been more seriously affected, but nothing like so great a mass would have been touched.

On the evening of the same day a messenger with a flag of truce was sent to the English Prime Minister, saying that the German commander very much regretted having been obliged to resort to measures which British obstinacy had necessitated. He stated that it was not intended to take further action for twenty-four hours, but that unless complete submission to the German terms were forthcoming by 11 p.m. on the 13th, he would have to take measures to which those he had already adopted would be as nothing.

The indignation of the British nation knew no bounds at the act of vandalism which had been committed, but indignation not backed up by power has but little effect. It was evident that the German commander would have no hesitation in burning down half London if he did not get the terms which he demanded. If he did this, millions of people would be ruined, and millions would die of starvation.

It was probable that if we had the fortitude to see our capital destroyed, the German force would eventually be compelled to lay down its arms. Only twenty-four hours was given to consider the matter. Military help within that period was out of the question. Five hundred millions was demanded, more than £500,000,000 worth of damage would be done.

As is usually the case, the rich men on this occasion showed less fortitude than the poor, and enormous pressure was brought by the moneyed classes to bear on the Ministry, which at the last hour accepted the German terms.

In less than a fortnight the Germans, with a loss of less than 5,000 men, had obtained the £500,000,000, with part of which they have since done so much to improve their navy. The negotiations with regard to the payment of the indemnity were now all that remained to be settled. The big banks found it impossible, in the conditions then obtaining, to collect more than some five or six millions in bullion.

The German commander was well aware that his conduct in burning part of the city would be called an outrage upon civilization. He knew that the navy would quickly return,

and being aware of the exasperated feelings of the British people, he felt certain that the Colonies would do all in their power to assist the Mother Country, and rightly judging that the Continent and America would be indignant at an action which savoured more of the tenth than of the twentieth century, considered it necessary to have some security for the indemnity which he had been promised. In compliance with this train of thought he demanded the persons of 500 leading Englishmen, to be held as hostages until the money had been satisfactorily handed over by the English to German financiers, and the other terms fulfilled.

A difficulty occurred in obtaining these hostages. Prominent politicians were among the first suggested, but with regard to their selection much difficulty arose. A Liberal Government was in power, and if Conservatives were chosen it was considered possible that the Liberals would not be too anxious to redeem their security. It was considered a matter of importance that the sureties should be men of wealth and position, but the requisite number of such persons was

not to be found solely in the ranks of Liberal politicians.

The names of two or three gentlemen were proposed by the British, but rejected by the Germans, on the ground that both parties would give a great deal to be rid of them. Eventually, however, 500 English gentlemen of position were selected, many of them being men of large estate, and quite unconnected with politics, and were shipped to Germany on June 15, following the 60,000 prisoners, who preceded them.

It is unnecessary to dwell longer on this humiliating page of our history. Suffice it to say that the £500,000,000 was found and paid by the end of August. The hostages and the 60,000 prisoners were returned at the end of the year, for which period peace with England had been stipulated. On the agreement being signed and £200,000,000 being paid on account, which transaction was carried out by the end of June, the invaders were transhipped to their own shores.

The English fleet had in the meantime returned and gained supremacy of the Europoan seas, but this in no way affected the fact that

London was held by a perfectly disciplined army, over 250,000 strong, which had the heart of the British Empire in its power.

In these circumstances to have attempted to go back on our agreement would have been impossible.

MAP A. *to face page 174*

SKETCH MAP

Showing

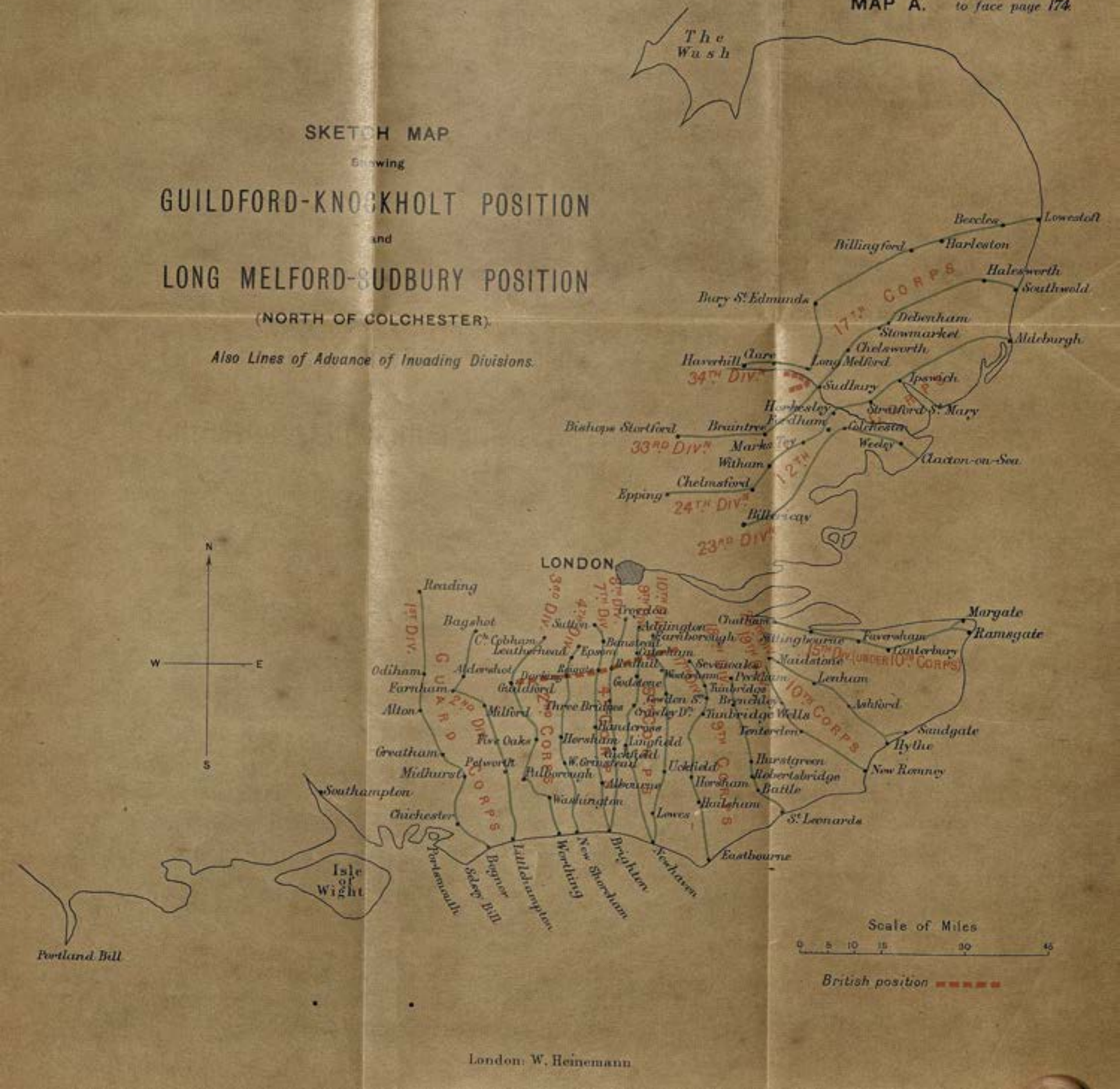
GUILDFORD-KNOCKHOLT POSITION

and

LONG MELFORD-SUDBURY POSITION

(NORTH OF COLCHESTER).

Also Lines of Advance of Invading Divisions.



London: W. Heinemann

PART II

CHAPTER 1

THE foregoing chapters dealt with the catastrophe which occurred to the British Empire in June, 1908, and also gave the terms of the treaty, which were carried out to the letter.

The Germans had an object in securing British neutrality for the coming year, which, at the date of the signing of the treaty, was not anticipated.

In this history of England it is not intended to dwell upon those momentous events in Europe which occurred during the years immediately following the invasion of England, but it would be equally impossible to write this history of our own country without touching upon them.

Early in November, 1908, on a pretext sufficiently specious to excite the feelings of the nation, but entirely of her own engineering,

Germany declared war on France. The time was opportune. Russia had not yet recovered from the external and internal troubles which had so shaken her. None other of the great Powers of Continental Europe gave France more than their sympathy. The Germans, absolutely ready for the war which they had brought on, invaded France, and in doing so violated the neutrality of Belgium. The war was by no means the same walk-over as was the campaign of 1870-71, but owing to their superior numbers, to their better company and battalion commanders, and to their superior cavalry, the Germans had France practically at their mercy before that year had passed for the duration of which the British nation had given its word to maintain neutrality.

Peace was proclaimed in Paris, the terms rendering it impossible for the French, during the coming twenty years, to raise an army which could hope to successfully meet that of Germany.

With France out of the way, Germany now proceeded to reap the real fruits of her victories. The twentieth century has proved

itself to be an age of big combines; small tradespeople are squeezed out of existence by stores and large companies; individual workers are dependent on the edicts of Trade Unionism, and small States have lost their right to exist, for in such things might is right.

The violation of the neutrality of Belgium had necessitated Germany's fighting that nation as well as the French, and the immediate result was that country's partition; for, as a sop to French pride, that slice of Belgium which Germany did not want was handed over to France. This was that part of the country which was south of the River Sambre to Namur, and south of the Meuse from Namur to Liége, and south of the stream running from Eupen on the German frontier to Liége.

It would appear that during this war the feelings of Denmark, Holland, and the Netherlands must have been much the same as those of sheep in a slaughter-house seeing their comrades butchered, and waiting for their own turn to come next. It is doubtful, however, whether the majority of the sheep realize what is happening to their comrades, and it is certain that the Governments of the king-

doms concerned refused to open their eyes to see what was disagreeable, and to take the energetic measures which would have been the logical consequence of their doing so.

History repeats itself, although actors may change places. In 1805 Prussia waited to see the Austrian power broken at Austerlitz, whilst by cajolery Napoleon induced Prussia to maintain neutrality, and thus secured his vulnerable left flank. So, by fair words, Prussia in 1908 induced the Governments of Denmark and the Low Countries to believe that she was their best friend, and that by the consumption of Belgium her appetite would be satisfied, but 'l'appétit vient en mangeant,' and high policy knows no gratitude other than its own interests.

On extremely plausible excuses these countries were swallowed up in the course of 1911, and became part of the German Empire, which thus obtained the sea border and magnificent harbours which were necessary to her ambition to become the greatest sea-power in the world.

Aggressive action on the part of Russia was known by the German authorities to be almost

out of the question. Her own internal affairs were sufficient to occupy her for many decades; besides which she must endeavour properly to assimilate that extremely indigestible morsel, Poland, before attempting to bite off more, except it were a harbour taken at the expense of Norway and Sweden. With regard to this, it has since transpired that Germany had signified that she would put no objection in the way of the fulfilment of Russia's object, in return for Russia's benevolent attitude towards German projects in other directions, and in 1911 Russia helped herself to a North Sea port.

The death of the Emperor of Austria, which occurred in 1910, was followed by the disintegration of his empire, a large portion of which, like a ripe peach, fell into the hands of the German Emperor, which were so ready to receive it, and which had so assiduously worked towards this result, and it voluntarily became part of his dominions.

As soon as this had taken place, the long-projected canal for passing warships from the Baltic to the Adriatic was commenced. The completion of this stupendous work will give

the German navy an enormous strategical advantage.

France having been put *hors de combat*, Germany found it possible to largely decrease her army, and spend the money thus saved on the keeping-up of that navy on the purchase of which a large portion of the indemnity extracted from us had been spent.

German policy, by its unscrupulousness, had roused the feelings of the whole civilized world against her, although no State or combination of States cared, for the benefit of a third party, to measure swords with so powerful an antagonist.

The British colonies were as exasperated as the Mother Country at the manner in which Germany, at a time of profound peace, had raised a pretext for robbery in order to aggrandize herself. Britons in all parts of the world felt united by one common bond, and constrained to raise armaments which would render the repetition of such a state of things impossible. That foolish, but well-meaning party, which had advocated disarmament on the theory that if we were rich, prosperous, and weak, we should escape the aggression of strong

and hungry nations as long as we remained peaceful and just, now found no followers, and they themselves admitted that the time had not yet come when the lamb, by pleading his innocence, could induce the wolf to refrain from eating him.

Fortunately the recuperative power of the nation was much greater than our invaders had anticipated. Misfortune had drawn us together, and all ranks and classes remembered that they were first and foremost Britons, and dropped small differences in order to present an undivided front to our external enemies.

It was acknowledged that Fortune had been against us when, in 1908, we had lost the temporary command of the sea, and it was considered sufficient to keep our navy proportionately as superior to that of Germany as it had previously been. The navy which Germany had built up by 1913 was, however, a very different thing to their navy of 1908; and besides its extra strength in warships, it had the immense advantage of the harbours on the newly-acquired territory. To meet the largely-increased demands on our resources, the British taxpayer had to put his hand deep into his

pocket to keep our fleet proportionately stronger. This, however, was done without a murmur, as being part of the punishment we had to pay for having been unprepared in 1908.

It was universally acknowledged that the success of the invasion had been primarily due to the unpreparedness of our land forces, and that our navy had to a great extent been the victim of ill-fortune. At the time of the Armada, and also in 1805, that fickle goddess, Fortune, had favoured her bold British wooers. In 1908 her smiles were averted. Chance plays an enormous part in all martial undertakings, but it would appear that the sea gives more scope for her caprices than does the field. New factors with unknown powers are introduced into, and revolutionize, naval warfare to an extent to which land tactics or strategy could not be suddenly effected by the adoption of some new instrument. This fact was acknowledged by the British people, who determined, without one whit abating their efforts to maintain naval supremacy, at the same time to have another string to their bow, and to raise an army equal to the task of defending our own shores, and also those dependencies

and colonies which we had inherited from forefathers who, by their blood and energy, had won them.

Adversity is a great cleanser and a great purifier. Men who in prosperity think of nothing but the moment and their own pleasure are wont, in their affliction, to think of higher subjects, to form high ideals and good resolutions, and to brace themselves to action. Nations, which after all are only a collection of individuals, in their tribulation undergo a like process; but, as with individuals, it is not always that the good resolutions formed are adhered to.

Some Englishmen, more far-sighted than the rest, had, previous to our lesson, foreseen that the British Empire was an image with clay feet, and had done all in their power to induce the nation to bake this clay into brick; but, though many admitted the truth of what they said, none in power were found willing to risk their positions by boldly declaring that a modern army, constructed on modern lines, with universal service as its basis, was necessary for the maintenance of the Empire. After our lesson of 1908 this principle was adopted without a murmur, and

an army was constructed on the following lines:

(*a*) A long-service army for garrisoning India and the colonies in time of peace and supplying 20,000 men, permanently stationed at Aldershot and ready to take part in any small expedition. A special section of this army, composed of men who had re-engaged, undertook the garrisoning of the Mediterranean stations and of all coaling-stations.

(*b*) Ten battalions of Guards enlisted for three years with the colours and nine in the reserve, to reinforce category (*a*) in any undertaking requiring more than 20,000 men, but of not sufficient importance to dislocate the industry of the nation, which would be the effect of calling out category (*d*).

(*c*) Three hundred thousand volunteers, enlisted as a temporary measure on terms which will later on be explained.

(*d*) An army of 100,000 men with the colours, obtained by the Militia Ballot slightly extended, serving for one year in the infantry, and two years in the cavalry and artillery, with nine and eight years in the reserve, respectively. During their first five years' service these men are

liable to be sent to any part of the Empire in case of a national emergency, but during their last five years they cannot be ordered abroad, though they may volunteer to go. This category will, when the present system has been in force for ten years, supply between 900,000 and 1,000,000 men, and category (*c*) will be done away with.

To refer again to category (*a*): 75,000 men of this category are required for garrisoning India; 25,000 for garrisoning South Africa, Egypt, and Ceylon; and 20,000 are permanently stationed at Aldershot. This makes a total of 120,000 men. It is, however, considered right that, out of so long a period as fifteen years, every man should be allowed to pass two or three years in England. As far as practicable, it is arranged for all men to be, in turn, posted to the army corps at Aldershot; but to allow for recruits who are still being trained in England, and to obviate the garrisons of foreign stations ever falling below establishment, it is found necessary to allow an extra 10 per cent. This extra 10 per cent. brings up the total of the foreign-service army to about 132,000.

The organization of the infantry of this force is as follows ; that of the other arms is constructed on the same lines :

Of the 132,000 men, 100,000 are infantry, organized into seventy-four battalions, each of five companies ; 10 per cent. of this 100,000, or 10,000, are allowed for as being recruits, or as invalided, or on furlough from foreign stations in which they are serving. This leaves 90,000 infantry with the colours. Of this number some 74,000 are required for India and the colonies, leaving 16,000 infantry over to form the infantry of the striking force of 20,000 men at Aldershot. Four companies, with an establishment of 250 of all ranks, are present with the foreign - service battalions, which are consequently each 1,000 strong. The headquarters of the fifth company, which is 215 strong, is permanently stationed at Aldershot. Officers from the regiment are posted to this company for three years. These companies are grouped together and called Nos. 1, 2, etc., Service Battalions. There are eighteen battalions, of which No. 1 has six and the others each four companies. These battalions are composed entirely of trained men,

most of whom have already done a tour of service abroad. They have nothing whatever to do with the training of recruits. It was at first argued that battalions composed in this manner would lack the *esprit de corps* which belongs to a permanent unit, but this is found not to be the case. The whole personnel of a company, as already stated, comes from a certain regiment, and the two or three years for which the men are, as trained soldiers, posted to them is found sufficient to weld the service battalions into a homogeneous whole.

Men enlisting in the long-service army —category (*a*)—as has already been stated, enlist for fifteen years with the colours. Statistics have proved that men suffer in health if they are kept more than five or six years continuously in India. To obviate this, they are, as far as possible, sent to Aldershot, or given furlough after doing a tour abroad. A man who has served for six years in India or any other tropical climate can claim, if the exigencies of the service permit, to be transferred to England or to South Africa. In spite of its undoubtedly excellent climate, South Africa has always remained an extremely

unpopular station. The purchasing power of a shilling in South Africa is only one-third of what it is at home, and one-tenth of what it is in India. Amusements, both for officers and men, are difficult to obtain, and the absence of female society in itself renders this quarter unsympathetic to the soldier, who is a keen admirer of the fairer half of his species.

On the completion of his fifteen years a man becomes entitled to a pension, or, if he chooses to do so, and is passed medically fit, he is permitted to join the Veterans' Corps. This Corps supplies 20,000 men for the garrisoning of places abroad which are coaling-stations and naval bases, and do not require a field army for their defence. Among these are Malta, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Straits Settlements. Besides this, men of the Veterans' Corps take over the greater part of the garrison and regimental duties.

In the old days our army, small as it was, was drained by the system of taking men from their work to perform duties which, although necessary, were in no way calculated to make them more efficient soldiers. These duties were various, but among them were orderlies

for the army corps, orderlies for the division, orderlies for the brigade, orderlies for the regiment, an orderly to look after the children's school, orderlies for the men's hospital, orderlies for the women's hospital, orderlies struck off all other duties to dust the garrison church, in some places orderlies for the washhouse to see that the washerwomen did not fight, officers' servants, officers' grooms, library orderly, men on canteen duty, regimental police, etc., besides fatigues of many and various descriptions. It had long been the custom in the Service to demand a party of a corporal and three men to do any duty which in civilian life would have been performed by one man. This large number of employed men was a relic from the time when we had long-service men who thoroughly knew their work, and who, being efficient, could without harm to themselves be excused from drill. But this was no longer the case with the short-service men, many of whom were called upon to perform non-military duties when they were practically still recruits. The soldiers, who took but little interest in the fatigues they were called upon to perform, certainly did not

work hard. The employer of the fatigue of twenty soldiers would have been well advised, if he had the opportunity, to take six civilians at £1 per week instead of twenty soldiers. But no option was allowed to military authorities in this matter, and if the ordnance officers required men they had to be supplied for him from some battalion or other, although men were sometimes, in spite of the regulations, taken from their recruits' drill in order to do so. No heed was taken of the fact that each of the young soldiers cost the public twenty-five shillings a week, and was taken from the duty for which he received his remuneration.

These necessary duties are now performed by men of the Veterans' Corps, or, in some cases, by their wives.

The difference made by this fact is so great that a young soldier to-day, unhampered as he is, learns more in his one year than he did in two, or even three, under the old system, when, besides being constantly taken from his legitimate work (his training for war), he was often a weakling of seventeen, who could not, without cruelty, be called upon to perform the day's work, which is easily carried out by our

present recruits, who are in their twentieth or twenty-first year.

The performance of these duties furnishes employment for another 15,000 men, and the establishment of the Veterans' Corps is therefore put at 35,000.

At the completion of their time in the Veterans' Corps—*i.e.*, after twenty-two years' service—men become entitled to a slightly higher scale of pension, and on again being pronounced medically fit, a certain proportion are allowed to remain on for a further period, but men of this section are not used for garrisoning foreign stations.

Non-commissioned officers for the short-service army—category (*d*), and also for the volunteers—category (*c*), are principally drawn from the long-service army.

Provision for life is thus made for almost every well-behaved man who joins category (*a*), small posts under Government being, as far as possible, reserved for non-commissioned officers and men who pass through this section on their reaching twenty-two years' service. The non-effective vote is in this way decreased, and not increased, for they receive pay for the posts

they are still thoroughly able to fill instead of a pension. Pressure is also brought to bear on large employers of labour, with the object of inducing them to give employment to a certain percentage of such men, who are mostly well qualified for small positions of trust.

As has already been stated, the object of category (*b*) is to have at hand a force of men, with a reserve to supplement category (*a*), and who can be called out and sent to any part of the Empire without drawing upon category (*d*), and thus dislocating the whole industry of the country.

Artillery has been added to the Corps of Guards. The terms of enlistment are three years with the colours and nine in reserve. The peace establishment of the Guard Corps, consisting of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, is 12,000 men, which in time of war becomes capable of expansion to some 45,000.

As it was recognised that it would be ten years before the whole force provided for in category (*d*) would be available, a volunteer force was raised as a temporary measure. This was done on the understanding that it should be gradually abolished as the ten years

required for the proper working of category (*d*) reached their completion.

The volunteer corps consists of 300,000 infantry, of whom a large proportion are cyclists. Men are allowed to enrol themselves as volunteers in the year in which their nineteenth birthday falls, and, on being elected, join the corps on October 1. A volunteer on being enrolled becomes subject to military law under certain modified conditions, and cannot, without special permission, which is very sparingly granted, leave the corps until he has served in it for ten years.

The names of all duly enrolled volunteers are excluded from the ballot for category (*d*). For this reason it is found necessary to limit the numbers to 300,000. If the supply of recruits for the volunteers in any special year is greater than the demand, resort is had to drawing lots. This course has to be adopted, as it is considered that if Commanding Officers have the option of choosing their recruits they will, not unnaturally, take the most intelligent and best-educated men, and the ranks of category (*d*) would suffer thereby.

Volunteers are formed into properly-organ-

ized brigades, the commander of the brigade being in all cases an officer from the regular army.

In deference to the feelings of volunteer officers, the experiment was at first made of appointing volunteers to the rank of Brigadier; but this has been found not to answer, for the following reasons:

Among the volunteer officers there are undoubtedly many capable men who have made such a study of their profession that they may be considered qualified for such a post, but the average qualifications of senior volunteer officers are very much below those of selected officers, who have retired from the line, and it is found hard to differentiate between volunteer officers.

Officers of the regular army have for long been accustomed to the principle of supersession by others more capable or more fortunate, but volunteer Colonels could not at all accustom themselves to this principle.

Colonel A., of the 1st Battalion Blankshire Regiment, a business man, could not at all see why he should not be promoted, and why Colonel B., of the 2nd Battalion, also a

business man, should be passed over his head, and heartburning and animosity were the consequence. Promotion in the volunteers is regimental, and not army; consequently the difficulty does not arise until appointments for the rank of brigade commander have to be made.

It was also found that officers and men listened and tried to learn by criticism delivered by an officer of the line whom they knew to be a man of war experience, whereas they would have resented it from another volunteer. It was therefore made a hard-and-fast rule that no volunteer officer should ever permanently hold an executive command higher than that of a battalion.

Category (*d*) consists of 100,000 men with the colours. In May of each year the birth-registers of every parish are carefully scrutinized, and an account of what has happened to a child is demanded from the parents or next-of-kin. Every parish in the country is required to supply a certain number of sound men in proportion to its population, and lots are then drawn as to who should serve.

In order to keep category (*d*) up to 100,000

men, it is found that about 30 per cent. of the manhood of the nation are called out. Those on whom the lot falls are medically examined, and, if not found fit, others are chosen in their place. On October 1 these men join the units to which they have been allotted, and, in the case of the infantry, remain with them until September 30 of the following year.

In the case of the cavalry and artillery, one year is not considered sufficient, and the term of service for these arms is fixed at two years.

Before drawing lots for the cavalry and artillery from the names of those who have been fixed on to serve, volunteers for these arms are asked for; and for the cavalry, at all events, they are usually forthcoming, despite the extra length of service.

Between 90,000 and 100,000 men are called out every year. During their first five years' service, including their time with the colours, these men are liable to be sent abroad in case of a national emergency, but during the last five years of their service they cannot be so ordered.

Every man is liable to be called upon to

serve, except the only son of a widow and men who are entering Holy Orders, and the son of the duke has often to serve by the side of the son of his gardener. The principle of this army is consequently thoroughly democratic.

It goes without saying that the class of men, being thus representative of the whole population, is, generally speaking, a very much higher one than that from which the majority of our recruits were drawn under the old system.

The culture of patriotism, and the duties of every citizen to the State under whose protection he lives, as well as drill and musketry, now form part of the curriculum at every school in the kingdom. It is this preliminary training which renders one year's military service sufficient instead of the two or three years demanded by other States from their soldiers.

The idea of any form of compulsory service was extremely objectionable to the whole nation, but the idea of it has proved to be worse than its execution. The very fact that men of all stations in life are called upon to serve has, in itself, been conducive to raising the whole

moral tone of the ranks. The feeding of the men under the old system was very good. It has been found possible, in some slight ways, to improve it, but the most important step towards popularizing compulsory service in the ranks is allowing a large percentage of well-behaved men to live out of barracks, allowance being given to them in lieu of rations; canteens on the restaurant principle are available for the use of these men. They have to present themselves at certain hours; if they are unpunctual, the privilege of living out of barracks is discontinued. Where there are barracks in the neighbourhood of large towns special trains are run out, just as in other places workmen's trains are run into large centres. A certain number of men who have served in the short-service army—category (*d*)—at the end of their service enlist in the long-service army—category (*a*), but the long-service army is principally recruited in the same manner as formerly obtained.

The period during which reserve men are called out in the autumn is fixed by officers commanding districts to suit the vocations of the majority of the men in that district.

Reservists up to 50 per cent. are allowed, on coming up, to bring with them and use their bicycles.

The pay of categories (*a*) and (*b*) remains much the same as it was formerly, except that slight increases are given to those men of category (*a*) who have served meritoriously above a certain number of years. The pay of category (*d*) has been slightly decreased.

The pay of non-commissioned officers has been increased, and much has been done to improve their status, and to thus obtain a better class, and to induce deserving men to remain on.

This alteration was highly necessary, for under the old system there was a great difficulty in obtaining good non-commissioned officers. With the object of inducing the private to enlist, his status had been much improved, his pay had been increased, and he was better fed and looked after, whereas the non-commissioned officer had proportionately gained but little. It had formerly been regarded as an adage that the non-commissioned officers were the backbone of the British army, but very little trouble had been taken to keep marrow in that backbone, and there were few prizes in the non-

commissioned ranks which made it worth the while of a good hard-working man to endeavour to win. Better quarters, and ones in which there is greater privacy, have now been provided, and have done more to increase the self-respect and status of the non-commissioned officer than would have been done by increasing his pay alone.

The fact that units are no longer unnecessarily moved from station to station has facilitated the carrying out of this principle, and now men of a good class join the army with the object of becoming and remaining non-commissioned officers.

The organization of regiments is carried out on the following lines:

The 1st Battalion of the Blankshire Regiment belongs to category (*a*), the long-service army, and is always quartered in India or the Colonies. The 1st battalions of regiments are moved about from place to place, as it is considered inadvisable to keep them any length of time at any specially unhealthy station. The 2nd and all other Battalions of the Blankshire Regiment belong to category (*d*), the short-service army. The 2nd Battalion is stationed in or near Blank-

shire, possibly at the same station as the 2nd battalions of the regiments furnished by one or two of the neighbouring counties. These battalions are never moved from their stations except for manœuvres, or in the case of a grave national emergency.

In olden days, with long-service men, it was wise not to keep a regiment too long in one place, and any breach of this principle meant that a very large number of men married; but this objection had ceased with the inauguration of short service and young soldiers.

The fact that home battalions are now no longer moved has resulted in great economy to the Government, as well as to the regiments, and also in the improvement of the conditions under which officers and men live. A regiment will carry out small improvements in barracks which they know they will occupy permanently, but would not do so simply for the benefit of their successors. A friendly feeling with regard to the inhabitants is also a natural result of that permanency. Instead of, as was formerly the case, being the prey of the local tradespeople, regiments are now able to obtain everything on the best terms. In the old days

they had no sooner learnt the ropes than they were transferred to another station.

There were in the United Kingdom several stations which were, from a military point of view, bad stations. Among these were Bradford, Portland, Sheffield, Ship Street and Beggar's Bush in Dublin, etc. These stations have been abolished, the barracks sold, and the money employed for buying ground in more suitable surroundings.

An Act has been passed, and four tracts of country, each of about twenty square miles, have been purchased at a cost of £500,000. The acquisition of this ground has tended enormously towards the efficiency of the army. Huts have been built in one of the corners of each of these areas, thus leaving the whole of the rest available for field-firing, etc. All roads passing through the areas have been acquired by the country, and on these areas nobody is allowed to reside, nor to trespass without the permission of the commandant. These areas were chosen where ground was cheap, and they are situated, one in Ireland, and three in England.

At the time that this history is being written,

viz., in November, 1915, the 2nd Battalion of the Blankshire Regiment consists of the men now serving; the 3rd Battalion is a reserve battalion, and on being called out would consist of the men who left the colours on September 30, 1915; the 4th Battalion of the men who left in 1914; the 5th Battalion of those who left in 1913; and the 6th Battalion of those who left in 1912.

In the case of a national emergency the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Battalions are liable to be sent abroad. The 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th Battalions are not liable to be thus sent.

The cavalry and artillery are only liable to be sent abroad for the first five years of their service, and their whole liability ends on the same day as it would have done if they had joined the infantry. Some 450,000 men (allowing for wastage) belonging to category (*d*) are thus available to be sent abroad in case of a national emergency, and the same number are available for home defence.

The 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Battalions are called out for a fortnight every alternate year.

An Adjutant and four other officers, a quarter-master-sergeant and four colour-sergeants, of each of these four battalions are kept at the same station as the 2nd Battalion, and, under the Colonel, are responsible for all the mobilization returns and for the clothing of the battalion.

Men, when they are called out for training, wear their own boots and underclothing, but receive their uniforms.

As is stated in another place, the 2nd, as well as the other Battalions of the regiment, are commanded by Majors, but at the station there is also a full Colonel of the regiment, and his Lieutenant-Colonel, or second in command, is also present.

The Colonel is responsible for the whole of the mobilization scheme of the regiment, and in case of war he would command those battalions liable for foreign service. The Lieutenant-Colonel acts in peace as his staff officer, but in war would command those battalions of the regiment which are not liable for foreign service. These latter battalions have in peace a permanent staff of one officer and five non-commissioned officers. It is the duty of the

Colonel commanding the regiment to allot work to the permanent staff of the skeleton battalions. A certain proportion are told off to obtain and and drill recruits for the 1st Battalion; the remainder are attached to the 2nd Battalion, and help to drill the large number of men which are yearly posted to it.

CHAPTER II

THE whole question of officering the army was altered as drastically as it was on the abolition of purchase. The establishment per battalion is one Major commanding, four Captains, sixteen subalterns, an Adjutant, and a paymaster. The establishment of a battery is one Captain and three subalterns; that of a regiment of cavalry, consisting of four squadrons and a reserve squadron, one Colonel or Lieutenant-Colonel commanding, one Major second in command, five Captains, twenty subalterns, an Adjutant, and a paymaster. With a battalion at home belonging to category (*d*), the Major commanding, the Adjutant, the Captains, and two out of the four subalterns of a company, are present. These belong to the battalion; the other officers required for duty are obtained from attached officers belonging to the reserve battalions of

the regiment. These are posted for duty by order of the Colonel commanding the regiment. Besides these, there are always present with the battalion certain officers belonging to the reserve, and there are always five officers present and doing duty with a company.

Commissions in the regular army—*i.e.*, categories (*a*) and (*b*), and the serving battalions of category (*d*)—are obtained after passing a competitive examination and going through a course at Sandhurst or Woolwich, as is at present the case; or an officer who has qualified for a commission in the reserve may be given one in the regular forces, subject to certain restrictions and to his passing an examination in military subjects before he has two years' service.

Candidates for commissions in the reserve have to make their application during the years in which their eighteenth or nineteenth birthday falls, and this is accompanied by a certificate that the candidate has passed a certain standard educational test. This application is made to the Colonel commanding the regiment, who sees the candidate, and if he considers him a fitting person to hold

a commission, is empowered to allow him to join the regiment on probation.

Reserve commissions are also granted to men serving their year who have the necessary educational and social qualifications, although over the age-limit prescribed for ordinary candidates.

Whilst a probationer, the candidate performs the duties of a private for the first, and of a non-commissioned officer for the last, six months of his year in the ranks, but associates with the officers, who thus have an opportunity of passing judgment on his qualifications. If at the end of the year it is considered that he will make a useful officer, he is attached as a Second Lieutenant to the 2nd Battalion of his regiment for one year, at the expiration of which he has to pass certain examinations. Having passed these, he is posted to one of the reserve battalions. Whenever this battalion is called out, he comes with it, and, besides this, the regulations stipulate that every second year he shall be attached for at least one month to a battalion in being. No officer in the reserve is allowed, under any circumstances, to permanently

hold any command higher than that of a battalion.

The principle has now been admitted that officers of a regiment should be allowed a voice as to whether they will accept a candidate for a commission. At first sight it would appear that this step is reactionary and against the liberal spirit on which our public services are conducted, but before coming to a conclusion the following points must be borne in mind: Officers of a regiment are compelled to live together on terms of greater intimacy than is the case in any other walk in life. On active service they often have for months to occupy the same bell-tent, and in peace an officer is often sent for a long period on detachment, where his sole possible companion is the comrade who accompanies him.

Discreditable behaviour on the part of an officer is always considered to reflect on his whole regiment, and to a certain extent on the army at large.

This principle is based on that of judging a man by his peers. Neither a social club nor a trade-union is compelled to accept as a member a person who is thought to be unsuitable,

and it has been considered only just that the same power should be delegated to officers, who, as has been shown, are infinitely more affected by the suitability or otherwise of their comrades.

The General commanding the district has to concur in the opinion passed on a candidate, and if this be unfavourable, it is his duty to carefully go into the reasons and to convince himself that they are good ones.

This means of supplying officers with a legitimate method of expressing their opinions on the desirability of a probationer has, among other things, entirely done away with 'ragging,' which, disgraceful as it was, was generally only an improper manner of bringing about a desirable result. For it seldom occurred that a man keen in his work or one likely to become a good soldier was made a victim.

In the case of a probationer joining through the reserve, the manner in which his fitness was tested has already been described. In the case of a cadet from Sandhurst, he is considered to be on probation for two years, and at any time before the expiration of that period can be sent away by the General commanding

the district on the recommendation of his Commanding Officer.

The lessons of the invasion demonstrated the great advantage of having decentralized double companies; but the necessity for this organization became even more apparent with the shortened length of service. A thousand recruits join together on October 1, and every officer and non-commissioned officer is required to drill these recruits, work which was previously performed by the Adjutant, sergeant-major, and a small staff. With four companies, although each is 250 strong, it is considered that only four Captains are required, and that to have a Captain as well as a Major with a company—a proposition which was once suggested—is only to have a fifth wheel to a coach. It has been found better, instead of this arrangement, to have an extra subaltern.

Each of the four sections of which the company is composed is commanded by an officer who has very nearly the same powers as were formerly vested in the Captains of the eight-company battalion.

All pay-work is in the hands of the battalion paymaster, who has four clerks to assist him,

and the company officers are released from this most irksome duty.

As has been already stated, our present army is a democratic one, and by the words 'social qualifications' it is not intended to signify that a man is debarred from becoming an officer because he may be unacquainted with the shibboleths of so-called fashionable society, but it is required from an officer that his feelings and his actions shall be those of a gentleman, and any proceeding of a shady nature invariably entails his having to resign his commission.

The ranks of our army had for many years carried but little responsibility when compared with similar ranks in the armies of great Continental Powers, and officers holding high-sounding titles had no men to command. This has now been altered, and the value of high military rank has increased by its comparative rarity.

The pay of a Captain was increased to what a Major's used to be, and this was only fair, for under the altered conditions it took a man as long to obtain his company as it did in the old days to obtain his majority.

A more marked difference was made between the rank of Lieutenant and Second Lieutenant. From six to seven years was the average length of service of an officer before attaining the former rank, and a company was never left without a Lieutenant ready to take the place of his Captain.

The fact that the number of subalterns per battalion is rather increased than diminished, and that there are only four Captains per battalion instead of eight, renders promotion to the rank of Captain much slower. From Captain to Major (Commanding Officer) is not slower than under the old régime. In the cavalry and artillery the effect is similar.

As has already been stated, the pay of ranks has been made proportionate to the increased responsibility which the ranks now involve; but the total pay of the officers of a battalion has not yet been increased, as, instead of one Lieutenant-Colonel, five Majors, and four Captains, the new establishment is one Major and four Captains. It is, however, now acknowledged that the regimental officer is underpaid, and steps are being taken to remedy this. For in no other walk in life are men called upon to

fill positions of such responsibility on such meagre pittances, and our present corps of officers is one consisting of hard-working professional soldiers.

In the old days promotion had always been regimental. An officer joined a certain regiment, and the chances were that he would remain in it throughout his soldiering career. A regiment was looked on as a happy family and a delightful social club, and, regarding it in this light, many men were found willing to forego promotion rather than leave the corps to which they were so attached.

In large units, such as the artillery and the engineers, promotion was usually fairly even, but in regiments of two battalions this was not the case. It often happened that in one regiment an officer obtained his captaincy with three years' service, whereas in another an equally deserving officer had to serve nine or ten years before attaining that rank. This was heart-breaking for those who wished to make the army their profession. The only way to obviate it was to adopt the system of army promotion, which had for long obtained in the armies of most of the great Powers,

and this was much facilitated by the longer period required for attaining the rank of Captain. Officers serving with categories (*a*) and (*d*) are on the same roster.

It is not intended here to go into details of the working of the present system, but the following are some of the principles by which it is guided: Instead of two gazettes a week there are only two gazettes a year. It is endeavoured, as far as possible, to keep officers in their own battalions up to, but not including, the rank of Major. The fact of there being only two gazettes a year makes it easier to keep officers in their own old regiments without disturbing their roster of seniority.

On some exceptional occasions a senior Lieutenant is left for six months in charge of a company of the battalion in which it is intended he shall remain instead of the vacant captaincy being at once filled up.

Second Lieutenants are promoted to the rank of Lieutenant after six years' service, and are not removed from their regiments on promotion.

The adoption of the above principles results in over 50 per cent. of the Lieutenants

remaining with their own regiments on promotion to the rank of Captain.

It is the business of the Military Secretary and his assistants to as far as possible post officers who are promoted out of their own regiments to units to which they will probably be congenial—*i.e.*, officers from Scotch regiments are, as far as possible, posted to Scotch regiments; riflemen to rifle regiments, etc. It is the exception, rather than the rule, to post an officer to his old regiment on promotion to the rank of Major or Commanding Officer.

All men are not strong, and it is asking a great deal of a man to report unfavourably on others only a little junior to himself, and with whom he has for years been on intimate terms. This difficulty does not exist in the case of an officer who is brought into command.

Brevet promotion has been abolished. Under the old system it sometimes occurred that an officer who was only a Captain in his regiment was a Brevet-Colonel in the army, and that, in the absence of the General, he commanded his own Commanding Officer. This system was absolutely indefensible. That it was allowed to exist so long was due to the fact that most

British officers were tactful gentlemen, who determined to make the best of a difficult situation, but this does not excuse the principle.

There is a well-known story of a certain Brevet-Colonel A., who was second in command of the 150th Regiment, and who, in the absence of the General, ordered a brigade parade, and on it inspected his own battalion. Having done so, he said to his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel B.: 'I have long known this battalion, but have never before had an opportunity of telling you that I consider it one of the worst in the service, and very badly commanded. I may, indeed, say I consider that its bad drill, as well as the unsatisfactory state of its interior economy, is entirely due to its Commanding Officer.'

Such episodes did not often happen, but any system which rendered them possible was a bad one.

Instead of brevet promotion, when it is considered desirable to push on an exceptionally capable officer, the following principle has been adopted:

In the case of a subaltern, he is given a

captaincy one, two, or three years before he would in the ordinary way have obtained it. In the same manner a Captain may be promoted Major over the heads of his contemporaries. In the case of Second Lieutenants, use of this rule is sometimes made in favour of a man who has passed good examinations at the Universities, and has consequently entered the army late.

With army promotion it is easy to calculate when an officer will, in the ordinary course, receive his next step.

Officers receive this special promotion either for exceptional work on active service, or for good work on the General or Regimental Staff.

No officer passed over in the ordinary way when he comes to the top of the roster is allowed to remain on in the army. This rule is without exception. There is no accelerated promotion after the rank of Major has been attained, and on coming to the top of the roster the senior officer is either promoted or is called upon to resign.

In the old days a very large number of officers reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and after serving a certain number of years in

that rank they became full Colonels, although only a small proportion of them ever held a full Colonel's appointment. There were in 1906, roughly speaking, 800 officers on the full Colonels list, but only 100 Major-Generals, including officers of departmental corps holding that rank. This has now been altered. As stated, officers who are not considered suitable for the higher ranks are now weeded in the lower ones. The process of selection is, consequently, gradual. The step which is responsible for the greatest thinning of the ranks is that from Captain to Major. Although promotion to the rank of Major is comparatively slow, from that time it is rapid. With the object of keeping the army young, Generals of all grades are not kept long in their appointments. There is now no step which so great a number of officers reach, whom it is not intended to promote further, as was the case with the rank of Colonel in the old days. With the present system the weeding commences lower down, and continues gradually to the top of the tree.

After having reached the rank of Major, and having satisfactorily commanded a bat-

talion, officers are now allowed to retire on the same pension as did a Lieutenant-Colonel in the old days; but, except in the case of an officer being invalided, a full retiring pension is not granted to any officer under the age of forty. Up to the age of forty all officers in receipt of such a pension are obliged to accept reserve commissions, and are liable to service until they reach that age.

A regulation had for long existed to the effect that no officer should remain on the staff longer than five years in succession, but this rule was as much honoured in the breach as in the observance. Now a rule has been passed that every staff officer under the rank of Major-General must, before promotion to higher grade, perform two years' duty in command of the unit proper to his rank. No exception is made to this rule, and regimental officers and men now feel the immense advantage of being legislated for by men who have themselves been through the mill.

Having every year to train the large number of recruits which they have under the present system, everything that is possible has been done to reduce unnecessary work for officers,

and with this object in view, courts-martial, boards, and committees have been reduced to a minimum.

The powers of Commanding Officers have been greatly increased, and only in cases in which there is a grave doubt as to the guilt of the offender, or in cases requiring a punishment of over three months' imprisonment, is a court-martial convened.

Commanding Officers are now (as, indeed, was also formerly the case) men trained in military law. Scales of punishments are laid down, and it is found that the awards show less divergence under the present system than they used to formerly, when they were the awards of courts-martial.

Trained barristers are attached to the staff of every command, and, as far as possible, attend those courts-martial which are unavoidable. This procedure renders illegalities, or great divergence of sentences, almost impossible.

Nine-tenths of the boards which, as a matter of form, used to meet, and to officially establish some well-known fact, have been abolished. Many hours a week have been gained for the

public service by thus freeing officers from useless and irksome duties.

For many years before the invasion the officering of the cavalry had presented great difficulties. It was at that time essential to an officer to have considerable private means in order to enter this branch of the service. Many efforts had been made to alter this state of things, but only met with partial success. In these circumstances, it was difficult to obtain the professionally smartest men for the cavalry.

The cavalry are the eyes and ears of the army, and young cavalry officers should, in intellect and sharpness, be the pick of their profession.

It is very unlikely that the result of an engagement will be directly affected by the action of any single infantry subaltern, whereas the report of a subaltern, or perhaps even a trooper, of cavalry may materially affect the whole course of the day's proceedings.

This fact has now been recognised, and every effort is made to obtain intelligent men as officers as well as for the rank and file of the cavalry.

Cavalry officers are slightly better paid than those in the infantry.

It is considered advancement for an infantry subaltern to be transferred to the cavalry, where the flow of promotion is kept more rapid, in order to have young men at the top of the tree, and most of the commissions in the cavalry are, as a matter of fact, reserved for young infantry officers who have shown themselves to be particularly smart.

With regard to the pay of our present army, there are now only 100,000 men of category (*d*) and 20,000 men of category (*a*) at the same moment under arms and drawing pay in the United Kingdom as against 156,000 in 1905, and the cost is proportionately decreased.*

In 1905-06, £817,000 was spent on the militia, and £48,000 on the yeomanry. These sums are now wiped out. In the same year £1,220,000 was spent on the volunteers. The

* This does not take into account the reserve battalions when called out, the corps of pensioners, nor the men who may be at home on furlough and whose battalions are abroad.

volunteers as organized after the invasion will cease to exist in the year 1920.

Against this it must be remembered that the cadres of the nine reserve battalions are being kept up, with their twenty-five officers and forty-five non-commissioned officers; but these officers and non-commissioned officers are made full use of in drilling and preparing the swollen battalions of category (*d*), which, having regard to their presence, are, as has been explained, kept under establishment in commissioned and non-commissioned ranks.

Numerically speaking, category (*a*) is of exactly the same strength as was the army required in the old days to garrison India and the Colonies, and the upkeep of that army is practically the same; but the working of it is infinitely more satisfactory.

No reserve pay is paid, but against this a few old-age pensions have to be given, though, as already explained, the majority of men belonging to this category are provided with appointments which render them self-supporting.

The old system of seven years' service with the colours and five with the reserve had some advantages over the other terms of enlistment

which from time to time obtained, but so long a term as seven years with the colours very much handicapped a man in obtaining civil employment, and at the end of his engagement he too often found it impossible to obtain work, and was a poor advertisement for that army which depended on voluntary enlistment for its recruits.

The system which now obtains, and by which every well-behaved man is provided for for life, has a very different effect, and one which is rapidly making its advantages felt.

This is a history, and not an army budget, and it is only the intention to touch on the estimates in such a way as to show that our present system is by far more economical, besides being infinitely more efficient and satisfactory.

The effect that compulsory service is having on the nation is already very marked. That third of the manhood which has had the advantage of a year's drill and discipline can at a glance be recognised from the other two-thirds—physically they are finer men, and employers seek them on account of their punctual and orderly habits.

It is easy to be wise and shut the stable door after the steed is stolen. That is, unfortunately, our position, and all we can do is to lock the door in such a manner as to assure ourselves that when the foal we have in the stable is grown up he shall not be stolen, as was his predecessor.

THE END

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